

Letters of a traveller; or, Notes of things seen in Europe and America. By William Cullen Bryant.

Item-23 122894 5138-B

The Gondola Venice.

THE PICTURESQUE SOUVENIR. PALM AVENUE IN A COFFEE PLANTATION, CUBA.
NEW YORK: GEORGE P. PUTNAM. 1851.

LETTERS OF A TRAVELLER; OR, NOTES OF THINGS SEEN IN EUROPE AND
AMERICA.

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

LC

THIRD EDITION.

NEW YORK: GEORGE P. PUTNAM, 155 BROADWAY.

LONDON: RICHARD BENTLEY.

1851.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CITY OF WASHINGTON

G470 B8 1851

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1850, By WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,
In the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.

STEREOTYPED BY BILLIN & BROS., 10 N. WILLIAM-ST.

F. C. GUTIERREZ, PRINTER, John-st., corner of Dutch.

TO THE READER.

The letters composing this volume were written at various times, during the last sixteen years, and during journeys made in different countries. They contain, however, no regular account of any tour or journey made by the writer, but are merely occasional sketches of what most attracted his attention. The greater part of them have already appeared in print.

The author is sensible that the highest merit such a work can claim, if ever so well executed, is but slight. He might have made these letters more interesting to readers in general, if he had spoken of distinguished men to whose society he was admitted; but the limits within which this may be done, with propriety and without offence, are so narrow, and so easily overstepped, that he has preferred to abstain altogether from that class of topics. He offers his book to the public, with expectations which will be satisfied by a very moderate success.

New York, *April* , 1850.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

To The Reader 3

Letter I.—First Impressions of an American in France.—Tokens of Antiquity: churches, old towns, cottages, colleges, costumes, donkeys, shepherds and their flocks, magpies, chateaux, formal gardens, vineyards, fig-trees.—First Sight of Paris; its Gothic churches, statues, triumphal arches, monumental columns.—Parisian gaiety, public cemeteries, burial places of the poor 9

Library of Congress

Letter II.—Journey from Paris to Florence.—Serenity of the Italian Climate.—Dreary country between Paris and Chalons on the Saone.—Autun.—Chalons.—Lyons.—Valley of the Rhine.—Avignon.—Marseilles; its growth and prosperity.—Banking in France.—Journey along the Mediterranean.— American and European Institutions 15

Letter III.—Tuscan Scenery and Climate.—Florence in Autumn.—Deformities of Cultivation.—Exhibition of the Academy of the Fine Arts.—Respect of the Italians for Works of Art 24

Letter IV.—A Day in Florence.—Bustle and Animation of the Place.—Sights seen on the Bridges.—Morning in Florence.—Brethren of Mercy.—Drive on the Cascine.—Evening in Florence.—Anecdote of the Passport System.—Mildness of the Climate of Pisa 29

Letter V.—Practices of the Italian Courts.—Mildness of the Penal Code in Tuscany.—A Royal Murderer.—Ceremonies on the Birth of an Heir to the Dukedom of Tuscany.—Wealth of the Grand Duke 37

Letter VI.—Venice.—Its peculiar Architecture.—Arsenal and Navy Yard.—The Lagoons.—Ceneda.—Serravalle.—Lago Morto.—Alpine Scenery.—A June Snow-Storm in the Tyrol.—Splendor of the Scenery in the Sunshine.—Landro.—A Tyrolese Holiday.—Devotional Character of the People.— Numerous Chapels.—Sterzing.—Bruneck.—The Brenner.—Innsbruck.— Bronze Tomb of Maximilian I.—Entrance into Bavaria 42

Letter VII.—An Excursion to Rock River in Illinois.—Birds and Quadrupeds of the Prairies.—Dad Joe's Grove.—Beautiful Landscape.—Traces of the Indian Tribes.—Lost Rocks.—Dixon.—Rock River; beauty of its banks.—A Horse-Thief.—An Association of Felons.—A Prairie Rattlesnake.—The Prairie-Wolf; its habits.—The Wild Parsnip 55

Library of Congress

Letter VIII.—Examples of Lynch Law.—Practices of Horse-Thieves in Illinois. —
Regulators.—A Murder.—Seizure of the Assassins, their trial and execution.—One of the
Accomplices lurking in the Woods.—Another Horse-Thief shot 64

6

Letter IX.—An Example of Senatorial Decorum.—The National Museum at Washington.
—Mount Vernon.—Virginia Plantations.—Beauty of Richmond. —Islands of James River.
—An Old Church.—Inspection of Tobacco.— Tobacco Factory.—Work and Psalmody.—
Howden's Statue of Washington 69

Letter X.—Journey from Richmond to Charleston.—Pine Forests of North Carolina.—
Collection of Turpentine.—Harbor of Charleston.—Aspect of the City 77

Letter XI.—Interior of South Carolina.—Pine Woods.—Plantations.— Swamps.—Birds.—
A Corn-Shucking.—Negro Songs.—A Negro Military Parade.—Character of the Blacks.—
Winter Climate of South Carolina 82

Letter XII.—Picolata.—Beauty of the Season.—The St. John's.—A Hammock.—Voyage
from Charleston to Savannah.—City of Savannah.—Quoit Club.—A Negro Burial-Place.
—Curious Epitaphs.—Bonaventure.—Majestic Avenues of Live-Oaks.—Alligators.—Black
Creek 90

Letter XIII.—Woods of Florida.—Anecdotes of the Florida War.—Aspect of St. Augustine.
—Its Streets.—Former Appearance of the City.—Orange Groves.—Fort of St. Mark.—
Palm Sunday.—A Frenchman preaching in Spanish 99

Letter XIV.—Climate of St. Augustine.—Tampa Bay.—Melons in January.—Insects in
Southern Florida.—Healthfulness of East Florida.—A Sugar Plantation.—Island of St.
Anastasia.—Quarries of Shell-Rock.—Customs of the Mahonese.—A Mahonese or
Minorcan hymn 106

Library of Congress

Letter XV.—Florida the “Poor Man's Country.”—Settlement of the Peninsula.—The Indian War.—Its Causes.—Causes of the Peace.—The Everglades.—St. Mary's in Georgia.—Plague of Sand-Flies.—Alligator Shooting.—Tobacco Chewing 121

Letter XVI.—The Champlain Canal.—Beauty of its Banks.—Whitehall.— Canadian French.—A Family setting out for the West.—The Michigan Lay.—Vermont Scenery 128

Letter XVII.—Grasshoppers.—White Clover.—Domestic Arrangements of two unmarried Ladies.—Canadian French Laborers.—Quakers.—A Pretty Mantua-Maker.—Anecdote told by a Quakeress.—Walpole.—Keene.—A Family of healthy young Women 134

Letter XVIII.—A Voyage to Liverpool.—Mountains of Wales.—Growth of Liverpool.—Aspect of the Place.—Zoological Gardens.—Cemetery among the Rocks.—Ornamental Cultivation.—Prince's Park.—Chester.—Manchester.—Calico Printing 144

Letter XIX.—Edale in Derbyshire.—A Commercial Traveller.—Chapel-en-le-Frith.—The Winnets.—Mam Tor.—Heathy Hills.—The Lark.—Caverns of the Peak of Derbyshire.—Castle of the Peverils.—People of Derbyshire.—Matlock.—Derby 154

Letter XX.—Works of Art.—Power's Greek Slave.—Exhibition of the Royal Academy.—Turner's late Pictures.—Webster.—Thorburn.—New Houses of Parliament.—Artists in Water-Colors 164

Letter XXI.—The Parks of London.—Their Extent.—Want of Parks in New York.—Sweeping of the Streets.—Safety from Housebreaking.—Beggars.—Increase of Poverty 168

Letter XXII.—Edinburg.—The Old Town.—The Castle.—Solid Architecture of the New Town.—Views from the different Eminences.—Poverty in the Wynds and Alleys.—Houses of Refuge for the Destitute.—Night Asylums for the Houseless.—The Free Church.—The Maynooth Grant.—Effect of Endowments 174

Library of Congress

7

Letter XXIII.—Fishwomen of Newhaven.—Frith of Forth.—Stirling.— Callander.—The Trosachs.—Loch Achray.—Loch Katrine.—Loch Lomond. —Glenfalloch.—Dumbarton.—The Leven 181

Letter XXIV.—Glasgow.—Its Annual Fair.—Its Public Statues.—The Free Church.—Free Church College.—Odd Subject of a Sermon.—Alloway.— Burns's Monument.—The Doon.—The Sea.—Burns's Birthplace.—The River Ayr 191

Letter XXV.—Voyage to Ireland.—Ailsa Craig.—County of Down.—County of Lowth.—Difference in the Appearance of the Inhabitants.—Peat-Diggers. —A Park.—Samples of different Races of Men.—Round Towers.—Valley of the Boyne.—Dublin.—Its Parks.—O'Connell.—The Repeal Question.— Wall, the Artist.—Exhibition of the Royal Hibernian Society 200

Letter XXVI.—Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell.—Humanity and Skill.—Quiet Demeanor of the Patients.—Anecdotes of the Inmates.—The Corn-law Question.—Coleman's Improvement on the Piano 210

Letter XXVII.—Changes in Paris.—Asphaltum Pavements.—New and Showy Buildings.—Suppression of Gaming-Houses.—Sunday Amusements. —Physical Degeneracy.—Vanderlyn's Picture of the Landing of Columbus 219

Letter XXVIII.—A Journey through the Netherlands.—Brussels.—Waterloo. —Walloons and Flemings.—Antwerp.—Character of Flemish Art.— The Scheldt.—Rotterdam.—Country of Holland.—The Hague.—Scheveling. —Amsterdam.—Broek Saardam.—Utrecht 223

Library of Congress

Letter XXIX.—American Artists abroad.—Düsseldorf: Leutze.—German Painters.—Florence: Greenough, Powers, Gray, G. L. Brown.—Rome: H. K. Brown, Rossiter, Lang 234

Letter XXX.—Buffalo.—The New Fort.—Leopold de Meyer,—Cleveland. —Detroit 241

Letter XXXI.—Trip from Detroit to Mackinaw.—The Chippewa Tribe.— The River St. Clair.—Anecdote.—Chippewa Village.—Forts Huron and Saranac.—Bob Low Island.—Mackinaw 248

Letter XXXII.—Journey from Detroit to Princeton.—Sheboygan.—Milwaukie. —Chicago.—A Plunge in the Canal.—Aspect of the Country 256

Letter XXXIII.—Return to Chicago.—Prairie-Hens.—Prairie Lands of Lee County.—Rock River District 264

Letter XXXIV.—Voyage to Sault Ste. Marie.—Little Fort.—Indian Women gathering Rice.—Southport.—Island of St. Joseph.—Muddy Lake.—Girdled Trees 269

Letter XXXV.—Falls of the St. Mary.—Masses of Copper and Silver.— Drunken Indians.—Descent of the Rapids.—Warehouses of the Hudson Bay Company.—Canadian Half-breeds.—La Maison de Pierre.—Tanner the Murderer 277

Letter XXXVI.—Indians at the Sault.—Madeleine Island.—Indian Dancing-girls. —Methodist Indians.—Indian Families.—Return to Mackinaw 287

Letter XXXVII.—The Straits of Mackinaw.—American Fur Company.— Peculiar Boats.—British Landing.—Battle-field.—Old Mission Church.— Arched Rock 296

Letter XXXVIII.—Excursion to Southern New Jersey.—Easton.—The Delaware. —The Water Gap.—Bite of a Copper-head Snake 303

Library of Congress

8

Letter XXXIX.—The Banks of the Pocano.—Deer in the Laurel Swamps.— Cherry Hollow.
—The Wind Gap.—Nazareth.—Moravian Burying Grounds. —A Pennsylvania German
311

Letter XL.—Paint on Brick Houses.—The New City of Lawrence.—Oak Grove 320

Letter XLI.—Islands of Casco Bay.—The Building of Ships.—A Seal in the Kennebeck.—
Augusta.—Multitude of Lakes.—Appearances of Thrift 325

Letter XLII.—The Willey House.—Mount Washington.—Scenery of the White Mountains.—
A Hen Mother of Puppies 331

Letter XLIII.—Passage to Savannah.—Passengers in the Steamer.—Old Times in
Connecticut.—Cape Hatteras.—Savannah.—Bonaventure.— Charleston.—Augusta 336

Letter XLIV.—Southern Cotton Mills.—Factory Girls.—Somerville 345

Letter XLV.—The Florida Coast.—Key West.—Dangerous Navigation.—A Hurricane and
Flood.—Havana 351

Letter XLVI.—Women of Cuba.—Airy Rooms.—Devotion of the Women. —Good Friday.
—Cascarilla.—Cemetery of Havana.—Funerals.—Cock-fighting. —Valla de Gallos.—A
Masked Ball 358

Letter XLVII.—Scenery of Cuba.—Its Trees.—Sweet-Potato Plantation. —San Antonio de
los Baños.—Black and Red Soil of Cuba.—A Coffee Estate.—Attire of the Cubans 370

Letter XLVIII.—Matanzas.—Valley of Yumuri.—Cumbre.—Sugar Estate. —Process of its
Manufacture 381

Library of Congress

Letter XLIX.—Negroes in Cuba.—Execution by the Garrote.—Slave Market. —African, Indian, and Asiatic Slaves.—Free Blacks in Cuba.—Annexation of Cuba to the United States 389

Letter L.—English Exhibitions of Works of Art.—The Society of Arts.— Royal Academy.— Jews in Parliament 402

Letter LI.—A Visit to the Shetland Isles.—Highland Fishermen.—Lerwick. —Church-goers in Shetland.—Habitations of the Islanders.—The Noup of the Noss.—Sheep and Ponies.— Pictish Castle.—The Zetlanders. —A Gale in the North Sea.—Cathedral of St. Magnus.— Wick 408

Letter LII.—Europe under the Bayonet.—Uses of the State of Siege.— Stuttgart.— The Hungarians.—Bavaria.—St. Gall.—Zurich.—Target-shooting. —France.—French Expedition to Rome 426

Letter LIII.—Volterra; its Desolation.—The Balza.—Etruscan Remains.— Fortress of Volterra 436

LETTERS OF A TRAVELLER

LETTER I. FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF AN AMERICAN IN FRANCE.

Paris, *August 9*, 1834.

In coming from Havre to Paris, every step of our journey reminded us that we were in an old country. Every thing we saw spoke of the past, of an antiquity without limit; everywhere our eyes rested on the handiwork of those who had been dead for ages, and we were in the midst of customs which they had bequeathed to their descendants. The churches were so vast, so solid, so venerable, and time-eaten; the dwellings so gray, and of such antique architecture, and in the large towns, like Rouen, rose so high, and overhung with such

Library of Congress

quaint projections he narrow and cavernous streets; the thatched cots were so mossy and so green with grass! The very hills about them looked scarcely as old, for there was youth in their vegetation—their shrubs and flowers. The countrywomen wore such high caps, such long waists, and 10 such short petticoats!—the fashion of bonnets is an innovation of yesterday, which they regard with scorn. We passed females riding on donkeys, the Old Testament beast of burden, with panniers on each side, as was the custom hundreds of years since. We saw ancient dames sitting at their doors with distaffs, twisting the thread by twirling the spindle between the thumb and finger, as they did in the days of Homer. A flock of sheep was grazing on the side of a hill; they were attended by a shepherd, and a brace of prick-eared dogs, which kept them from straying, as was done thousands of years ago. Speckled birds were hopping by the sides of the road; it was the magpie, the bird of ancient fable. Flocks of what I at first took for the crow of our country were stalking in the fields, or sailing in the air over the old elms; it was the rook, the bird made as classical by Addison as his cousin the raven by the Latin poets.

Then there were the old chateaus on the hills, built with an appearance of military strength, their towers and battlements telling of feudal times. The groves by which they were surrounded were for the most part clipped into regular walls, and pierced with regularly arched passages, leading in various directions, and the trees compelled by the shears to take the shape of obelisks and pyramids, or other fantastic figures, according to the taste of the middle ages. As we drew nearer to Paris, we saw the plant which Noah first committed 11 to the earth after the deluge—you know what that was I hope—trained on low stakes, and growing thickly and luxuriantly on the slopes by the side of the highway. Here, too, was the tree which was the subject of an early Christian miracle, the fig, its branches heavy with the bursting fruit just beginning to ripen for the market.

But when we entered Paris, and passed the Barrière d'Etoile, with its lofty triumphal arch; when we swept through the arch of Neuilly, and came in front of the Hotel des Invalides, where the aged or maimed soldiers, the living monuments of so many battles, were walking or sitting under the elms of its broad esplanade; when we saw the colossal statues

Library of Congress

of statesmen and warriors frowning from their pedestals on the bridges which bestride the muddy and narrow channel of the Seine; when we came in sight of the gray pinnacles of the Tuilleries, and the Gothic towers of Notre-Dame, and the Roman ones of St. Sulpice, and the dome of the Pantheon, under which lie the remains of so many of the great men of France, and the dark column of Place Vendôme, wrought with figures in relief, and the obelisk brought from Egypt to ornament the Place Louis Quatorze, the associations with antiquity which the country presents, from being general, became particular and historical. They were recollections of power, and magnificence, and extended empire; of valor and skill in war which had held the world in fear; of dynasties that had risen and passed away; of battles and victories which had left no other fruits than their monuments.

The solemnity of these recollections does not seem to press with much weight upon the minds of the people. It has been said that the French have become a graver nation than formerly; if so, what must have been their gayety a hundred years ago? To me they seem as light-hearted and as easily amused as if they had done nothing but make love and quiz their priests since the days of Louis XIV.—as if their streets had never flowed with the blood of Frenchmen shed by their brethren—as if they had never won and lost a mighty empire. I can not imagine the present generation to be less gay than that which listened to the comedies of Molière at their first representation; particularly when I perceive that even Molière's pieces are too much burdened with thought for a Frenchman of the present day, and that he prefers the lighter and more frivolous vaudeville. The Parisian has his amusements as regularly as his meals, the theatre, music, the dance, a walk in the Tuilleries, a refecton in the café, to which ladies resort as commonly as the other sex. Perpetual business, perpetual labor, is a thing of which he seems to have no idea. I wake in the middle of the night, and I hear the fiddle going, and the sound of feet keeping time, in some of the dependencies of the large building near the Tuilleries, in which I have my lodgings.

When a generation of Frenchmen

“Have played, and laughed, and danced, and drank their fill”—

when they have seen their allotted number of vaudevilles and swallowed their destined allowance of weak wine and bottled small-beer, they are swept off to the cemetery of Montmartre, or of Père la Chaise, or some other of the great burial-places which lie just without the city. I went to visit the latter of these the other day. You are reminded of your approach to it by the rows of stone-cutters' shops on each side of the street, with a glittering display of polished marble monuments. The place of the dead is almost a gayer-looking spot than the ordinary haunts of Parisian life. It is traversed with shady walks of elms and limes, and its inmates lie amidst thickets of ornamental shrubs and plantations of the most gaudy flowers. Their monuments are hung with wreaths of artificial flowers, or of those natural ones which do not lose their color and shape in drying, like the amaranth and the everlasting. Parts of the cemetery seem like a city in miniature; the sepulchral chapels, through the windows of which you see crucifixes and tapers, stand close to each other beside the path, intermingled with statues and busts.

There is one part of this repository of the dead which is little visited, that in which the poor are buried, where those who have dwelt apart from their more fortunate fellow-creatures in life lie apart in death. Here are no walks, 2 14 no shade of trees, no planted, shrubbery, but ridges of raw earth, and tufts of coarse herbage show where the bodies are thrown together under a thin covering of soil. I was about to walk over the spot, but was repelled by the sickening exhalations that rose from it.

15

LETTER II. A JOURNEY TO FLORENCE.

Florence, *Sept* 27, 1834.

Library of Congress

I have now been in this city a fortnight, and have established myself in a suite of apartments lately occupied, as the landlord told me, in hopes I presume of getting a higher rent, by a Russian prince. The Arno flows, or rather stands still, under my windows, for the water is low, and near the western wall of the city is frugally dammed up to preserve it for the public baths. Beyond, this stream so renowned in history and poetry, is at this season but a feeble rill, almost lost among the pebbles of its bed, and scarcely sufficing to give drink to the pheasants and hares of the Grand Duke's Cascine on its banks. Opposite my lodgings, at the south end of the *Ponte alla Carraia*, is a little oratory, before the door of which every good Catholic who passes takes off his hat with a gesture of homage; and at this moment a swarthy, weasel-faced man, with a tin box in his hand, is gathering contributions to pay for the services of the chapel, rattling his coin to attract the attention of the pedestrians, and calling out to those who seem disposed to pass without paying. To the north and west, the peaks 16 of the Appenines are in full sight, rising over the spires of the city and the groves of the Cascine. Every evening I see them through the soft, delicately-colored haze of an Italian sunset, looking as if they had caught something of the transparency of the sky, and appearing like mountains of fairy-land, instead of the bleak and barren ridges of rock which they really are. The weather since my arrival in Tuscany has been continually serene, the sky wholly cloudless, and the temperature uniform—oppressively warm in the streets at noon, delightful at morning and evening, with a long, beautiful, golden twilight, occasioned by the reflection of light from the orange-colored haze which invests the atmosphere. Every night I am reminded that I am in the land of song, for until two o'clock in the morning I hear “all manner of tunes” chanted by people in the streets in all manner of voices.

I believe I have given you no account of our journey from Paris to this place. That part of it which lay between Paris and Chalons, on the Saone, may be described in a very few words. Monotonous plains, covered with vineyards and wheat-fields, with very few trees, and those spoiled by being lopped for fuel—sunburnt women driving carts or at work in the fields—gloomy, cheerless-looking towns, with narrow, filthy streets—troops

Library of Congress

of beggars surrounding your carriage whenever you stop, or whenever the nature of the roads obliges the horses to walk, and chanting their requests in the most doleful whine imaginable—such 17 are the sights and sounds that meet you for the greater part of two hundred and fifty miles. There are, however, some exceptions as to the aspect of the country. Autun, one of the most ancient towns of France, and yet retaining some remains of Roman architecture, lies in a beautiful and picturesque region. A little beyond that town we ascended a hill by a road winding along a glen, the rocky sides of which were clothed with an unpruned wood, and a clear stream ran dashing over the stones, now on one side of the road and then on the other—the first instance of a brook left to follow its natural channel which I had seen in France. Two young Frenchmen, who were our fellow-passengers, were wild with delight at this glimpse of unspoiled nature. They followed the meanderings of the stream, leaping from rock to rock, and shouting till the woods rang again.

Of Chalons I have nothing to tell you. Abelard died there, and, his tomb was erected with that of Eloise in the church of St. Marcel; but the church is destroyed, and the monument has been transported to the cemetery of Père la Chaise, and with it all the poetry of the place is vanished. But if you would make yourself supremely uncomfortable, travel as I did in a steamboat down the Saone from Chalons to Lyons, on a rainy day. Crowded into a narrow, dirty cabin, with benches on each side and a long table in the middle, at which a set of Frenchmen with their hats on are playing cards and eating *déjeuners à la fourchette* all day long, and deafening you with their noise, while waiters are 2* 18 running against your legs and treading on your toes every moment, and the water is dropping on your head through the cracks of the deck-floor, you would be forced to admit the superlative misery of such a mode of travelling. The approach to Lyons, however, made some amends for these inconveniences. The shores of the river, hitherto low and level, began to rise into hills, broken with precipices and crowned by castles, some in ruins and others entire, and seemingly a part of the very rocks on which they stood, so old and mossy and strong did they seem. What struck me most in Lyons was the superiority of its people in

Library of Congress

looks and features to the inhabitants of Paris—the clatter and jar of silk-looms with which its streets resounded—and the picturesque beauty of its situation, placed as it is among steeps and rocks, with the quiet Saone on one side, and the swiftly-running Rhone on the other. In our journey from Lyons to Marseilles we travelled by land instead of taking the steamboat, as is commonly done as far as Avignon. The common books of travels will tell you how numerous are the ruins of feudal times perched upon the heights all along the Rhone, remnants of fortresses and castles, overlooking a vast extent of country and once serving as places of refuge to the cultivators of the soil who dwelt in their vicinity—how frequently also are to be met with the earlier yet scarcely less fresh traces of Roman colonization and dominion, in gateways, triumphal arches, walls, and monuments—how on entering 19 Provence you find yourself among a people of a different physiognomy from those of the northern provinces, speaking a language which rather resembles Italian than French—how the beauty of the women of Avignon still does credit to the taste of the clergy, who made that city for more than half a century the seat of the Papal power—and how, as you approach the shores of the Mediterranean, the mountains which rise from the fruitful valleys shoot up in wilder forms, until their summits become mere pinnacles of rock wholly bare of vegetation.

Marseilles is seated in the midst of a semicircle of mountains of whitish rock, the steep and naked sides of which scarce afford “a footing for the goat.” Stretching into the Mediterranean they inclose a commodious harbor, in front of which are two or three rocky islands anchored in a sea of more vivid blue than any water I had ever before seen. The country immediately surrounding the city is an arid and dusty valley, intersected here and there with the bed of a brook or torrent, dry during the summer. It is carefully cultivated, however, and planted with vineyards, and orchards of olive, fig, and pomegranate trees. The trees being small and low, the foliage of the olive thin and pale, the leaves of the fig broad and few, and the soil appearing everywhere at their roots, as well as between the rows of vines, the vegetation, when viewed from a little distance, has a meagre and ragged appearance. The whiteness of the hills, which the eye can hardly bear to rest upon

Library of Congress

at 20 noon, the intense blue of the sea, the peculiar forms of the foliage, and the deficiency of shade and verdure, made me almost fancy myself in a tropical region.

The Greeks judged well of the commercial advantages of Marseilles when they made it the seat of one of their early colonies. I found its streets animated with a bustle which I had not seen since I left New York, and its port thronged with vessels from all the nations whose coasts border upon the great midland sea of Europe. Marseilles is the most flourishing seaport in France; it has already become to the Mediterranean what New York is to the United States, and its trade is regularly increasing. The old town is ugly, but the lower or new part is nobly built of the light-colored stone so commonly used in France, and so easily wrought—with broad streets and, what is rare in French towns, convenient sidewalks. New streets are laid out, gardens are converted into building-lots, the process of levelling hills and filling up hollows is going on as in New York, the city is extending itself on every side, and large fortunes have been made by the rise in the value of landed property.

In a conversation with an intelligent gentleman resident at Marseilles and largely engaged in commercial and moneyed transactions, the subject of the United States Bank was mentioned. Opinions in France, on this question of our domestic politics, differ according as the opportunities of information possessed by the individual are more or less ample, or as he is more or less in favor of chartered banks. The gentleman remarked that without any reference to the question of the United States Bank, he hoped the day would never come when such an institution would be established in France. The project he said had some advocates, but they had not yet succeeded, and he hoped never would succeed in the introduction of that system of paper currency which prevailed in the United States. He deprecated the dangerous and uncertain facilities of obtaining credit which are the fruit of that system, which produce the most ruinous fluctuations in commerce, encourage speculation and extravagance of all kinds, and involve the prudent and laborious in the ruin which falls upon the rash and reckless. He declared himself satisfied with the state of the currency of France, with which, if fortunes were not suddenly built up they were not

Library of Congress

suddenly overthrown, and periods of apparent prosperity were not followed by seasons of real distress.

I made the journey from Marseilles to Florence by land. How grand and wild are the mountains that overlook the Mediterranean; how intense was the heat as we wound our way along the galleries of rock cut to form a road; how excellent are the fruits, and how thick the mosquitoes at Nice; how sumptuous are the palaces, how narrow and dark the streets, and how pallid the dames of Genoa; and how beautiful we found our path among the trees overrun with vines as we approached southern Italy, are matters which I 22 will take some other opportunity of relating. On the 12th of September our *vetturino* set us down safe at the *Hotel de l'Europe* in Florence.

I think I shall return to America even a better patriot than when I left it. A citizen of the United States travelling on the continent of Europe, finds the contrast between a government of power and a government of opinion forced upon him at every step. He finds himself delayed at every large town and at every frontier of a kingdom or principality, to submit to a strict examination of the passport with which the jealousy of the rulers of these countries has compelled him to furnish himself. He sees everywhere guards and sentinels armed to the teeth, stationed in the midst of a population engaged in their ordinary occupations in a time of profound peace; and to supply the place of the young and robust thus withdrawn from the labors of agriculture he beholds women performing the work of the fields. He sees the many retained in a state of hopeless dependence and poverty, the effect of institutions forged by the ruling class to accumulate wealth in their own hands. The want of self-respect in the inferior class engendered by this state of things, shows itself in the acts of rapacity and fraud which the traveller meets with throughout France and Italy, and, worse still, in the shameless corruption of the Italian custom-houses, the officers of which regularly solicit a paltry bribe from every passenger as the consideration of leaving his baggage unexamined. I am told that in this 23 place the custom of giving presents extends even to the courts of justice, the officers of which, from the highest to the lowest, are in the constant practice of receiving them. No American can

see how much jealousy and force on the one hand, and necessity and fear on the other, have to do with keeping up the existing governments of Europe, without thanking heaven that such is not the condition of his own country.

24

LETTER III. TUSCAN SCENERY AND CLIMATE.

Florence, *October* 11, 1834.

The bridge over the Arno, immediately under my window, is the spot from which Cole's fine landscape, which you perhaps remember seeing in the exhibition of our Academy, was taken. It gives, you may recollect, a view of the Arno travelling off towards the west, its banks overhung with trees, the mountain-ridges rising in the distance, and above them the sky flushed with the colors of sunset. The same rich hues I behold every evening in the quarter where they were seen by the artist when he made them permanent on his canvas.

There is a great deal of prattle about Italian skies: the skies and clouds of Italy, so far as I have had an opportunity of judging, do not present so great a variety of beautiful appearances as our own; but the Italian atmosphere is far more uniformly fine than ours. Not to speak of its astonishing clearness, it is pervaded by a certain warmth of color which enriches every object. This is more remarkable about the time of sunset, when the mountains put on an aerial aspect, as if they belonged to another and fairer world; and a little after the sun has gone down, the air is flushed with a glory which seems to transfigure all that it incloses. Many of the fine old palaces of Florence, you know, are built in a gloomy though grand style of architecture, of a dark-colored stone, massive and lofty, and over-looking narrow streets that lie in almost perpetual shade. But at the hour of which I am speaking, the bright warm radiance reflected from the sky to the earth, fills the darkest lanes, streams into the most shadowy nooks, and makes the prison-like structures glitter as with a brightness of their own.

Library of Congress

It is now nearly the middle of October, and we have had no frost. The strong summer heats which prevailed when I came hither, have by the slowest gradations subsided into an agreeable autumnal temperature. The trees keep their verdure, but I perceive their foliage growing thinner, and when I walk in the Cascine on the other side of the Arno, the rustling of the lizards, as they run among the heaps of crisp leaves, reminds me that the autumn is wearing away, though the ivy which clothes the old elms has put forth a profuse array of blossoms, and the walks murmur with been like our orchards in spring. As I look along the declivities of the Appenines, I see the raw earth every day more visible between the ranks of olive-trees and the well-pruned maples which support the vines.

If I have found my expectations of Italian scenery, in some respects, below the reality, in other respects they 3 26 have been disappointed. The forms of the mountains are wonderfully picturesque, and their effect is heightened by the rich atmosphere through which they are seen, and by the buildings, imposing from their architecture or venerable from time, which crown the eminences. But if the hand of man has done something to embellish this region, it has done more to deform it. Not a tree is suffered to retain its natural shape, not a brook to flow in its natural channel. An exterminating war is carried on against the natural herbage of the soil. The country is without woods and green fields; and to him who views the vale of the Arno "from the top of Fiesole," or any of the neighboring heights, grand as he will allow the circle of the mountains to be, and magnificent the edifices with which the region is adorned, it appears, at any time after midsummer, a huge valley of dust, planted with low rows of the pallid and thin-leaved olive, or the more dwarfish maple on which the vines are trained. The simplicity of nature, so far as can be done, is destroyed; there is no fine sweep of forest, no broad expanse of meadow or pasture ground, no ancient and towering trees clustered about the villas, no rows of natural shrubbery following the course of the brooks and rivers. The streams, which are often but the beds of torrents dry during the summer, are confined in straight channels by stone walls and embankments; the slopes are broken up and disfigured by terraces; and the trees are kept down by constant pruning and lopping, until half way up the sides

Library of Congress

27 of the Appenines, where the limit of cultivation is reached, and thence to the summit is a barren steep of rock, without herbage or soil. The grander features of the landscape, however, are fortunately beyond the power of man to injure; the lofty mountain-summits, bare precipices cleft with chasms, and pinnacles of rock piercing the sky, betokening, far more than any thing I have seen elsewhere, a breaking up of the crust of the globe in some early period of its existence. I am told that in May and June the country is much more beautiful than at present, and that owing to a drought it now appears under a particular disadvantage.

The Academy of the Fine Arts has had its exhibition since I arrived. In its rooms, which were gratuitously open to the public, I found a large crowd of gazers at the pictures and statues. Many had come to look at some work ordered by an acquaintance; others made the place a morning lounge. In the collection were some landscapes by Morghen, the son of the celebrated engraver, very fresh and clear; a few pieces sent by Bezzoli, one of the most eminent Italian painters of his time; a statue of Galileo, not without merit, by Costoli, for there is always a Galileo or two, I believe, at every exhibition of the kind in Florence; portraits good, bad, and indifferent, in great abundance, and many square feet of canvas spoiled by attempts at historical painting.

Let me remark, by the way, that a work of art is a sacred thing in the eyes of Italians of all classes, never to be defaced, never to be touched, a thing to be looked at merely. A statue may stand for ages in a public square, within the reach of any one who passes, and with no sentinel to guard it, and yet it shall not only be safe from mutilation, but the surface of the marble shall never be scratched, or even irreverently scored with a lead pencil. So general is this reverence for art, that the most perfect confidence is reposed in it. I remember that in Paris, as I was looking at a colossal plaster cast of Napoleon at the Hotel des Invalides, a fellow armed with a musket who stood by it bolt upright, in the stiff attitude to which the soldier is drilled, gruffly reminded me that I was too near, though I

was not within four feet of it. In Florence it is taken for granted that you will do no mischief, and therefore you are not watched.

29

LETTER IV. A DAY IN FLORENCE.

Pisa, *December* 11, 1834.

It is gratifying to be able to communicate a piece of political intelligence from so quiet a nook of the world as this. Don Miguel arrived here the other day from Genoa, where you know there was a story that he and the Duchess of Berri, a hopeful couple, were laying their heads together. He went to pay his respects to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who is now at Pisa, and it was said by the gossips of the place that he was coldly received, and was given to understand that he could not be allowed to remain in the Tuscan territory. There was probably nothing in all this. Don Miguel has now departed for Rome, and the talk of to-day is that he will return before the end of the winter. He is doubtless wandering about to observe in what manner he is received at the petty courts which are influenced by the Austrian policy, and in the mean time lying in wait for some favorable opportunity of renewing his pretensions to the crown of Spain.

Pisa offers a greater contrast to Florence than I had imagined could exist between two Italian cities. This is the 3* 30 very seat of idleness and slumber; while Florence, from being the residence of the Court, and from the vast number of foreigners who throng to it, presents during several months of the year an appearance of great bustle and animation. Four thousand English, an American friend tells me, visit Florence every winter, to say nothing of the occasional residents from France, Germany, and Russia. The number of visitors from the latter country is every year increasing, and the echoes of the Florence gallery have been taught to repeat the strange accents of the Slavonic. Let me give you the history of a fine day in October, passed at the window of my lodgings on the Lung' Arno, close to the bridge *Alla Carraja*. Waked by the jangling of all the bells in Florence

Library of Congress

and by the noise of carriages departing loaded with travellers, for Rome and other places in the south of Italy, I rise, dress myself, and take my place at the window. I see crowds of men and women from the country, the former in brown velvet jackets, and the latter in broad-brimmed straw hats, driving donkeys loaded with panniers or trundling hand-carts before them, heaped with grapes, figs, and all the fruits of the orchard, the garden, and the field. They have hardly passed, when large flocks of sheep and goats make their appearance, attended by shepherds and their families, driven by the approach of winter from the Appenines, and seeking the pastures of the Maremma, a rich, but, in the summer, an unhealthy tract on the coast. The men and boys are dressed in knee-breeches, 31 the women in bodices, and both sexes wear capotes with pointed hoods, and felt hats with conical crowns; they carry long staves in their hands, and their arms are loaded with kids and lambs too young to keep pace with their mothers. After the long procession of sheep and goats and dogs and men and women and chil dren, come horses loaded with cloths and poles for tents, kitchen utensils, and the rest of the younglings of the flock. A little after sunrise I see well-fed donkeys, in coverings of red cloth, driven over the bridge to be milked for invalids. Maid-servants, bareheaded, with huge high carved combs in their hair, waiters of coffee-houses carrying the morning cup of coffee or chocolate to their customers, baker's boys with a dozen loaves on a board balanced on their heads, milkmen with rush baskets filled with flasks of milk, are crossing the streets in all directions. A little later the bell of the small chapel opposite to my window rings furiously for a quarter of an hour, and then I hear mass chanted in a deep strong nasal tone. As the day advances, the English, in white hats and white pantaloons, come out of their lodgings, accompanied sometimes by their hale and square-built spouses, and saunter stiffly along the Arno, or take their way to the public galleries and museums. Their massive, clean, and brightly-polished carriages also begin to rattle through the streets, setting out on excursions to some part of the environs of Florence—to Fiesole, to the Pratolino, to the Bello Sguardo, to the Poggio Imperiale. Sights of a 32 different kind now present themselves. Sometimes it is a troop of stout Franciscan friars, in sandals and brown robes, each carrying his staff and wearing a brown broad-brimmed hat with a hemispherical crown. Sometimes it is a

Library of Congress

band of young theological students, in purple cassocks with red collars and cuffs, let out on a holiday, attended by their clerical instructors, to ramble in the Cascine. There is a priest coming over the bridge, a man of venerable age and great reputation for sanctity—the common people crowd around him to kiss his hand, and obtain a kind word from him as he passes. But what is that procession of men in black gowns, black gaiters, and black masks, moving swiftly along, and bearing on their shoulders a litter covered with black cloth? These are the *Brethren of Mercy*, who have assembled at the sound of the cathedral bell, and are conveying some sick or wounded person to the hospital. As the day begins to decline, the numbers of carriages in the streets, filled with gaily-dressed people attended by servants in livery, increases. The Grand Duke's equipage, an elegant carriage drawn by six horses, with coachmen, footmen, and outriders in drab-colored livery, comes from the Pitti Palace, and crosses the Arno, either by the bridge close to my lodgings, or by that called *Alla Santa Trinità*, which is in full sight from the windows. The Florentine nobility, with their families, and the English residents, now throng to the Cascine, to drive at a slow pace through its thickly-planted walks of elms, oaks, and ilexes. As the sun is sinking I perceive the Quay, on the other side of the Arno, filled with a moving crowd of well-dressed people, walking to and fro, and enjoying the beauty of the evening. Travellers now arrive from all quarters, in cabriolets, in calashes, in the shabby *vettura*, and in the elegant private carriage drawn by post-horses, and driven by postillions in the tightest possible deer-skin breeches, the smallest red coats, and the hugest jack-boots. The streets about the doors of the hotels resound with the cracking of whips and the stamping of horses, and are encumbered with carriages, heaps of baggage, porters, postillions, couriers, and travellers. Night at length arrives—the time of spectacles and funerals. The carriages rattle towards the opera-houses. Trains of people, sometimes in white robes and sometimes in black, carrying blazing torches and a cross elevated on a high pole before a coffin, pass through the streets chanting the service for the dead. The Brethren of Mercy may also be seen engaged in their office. The rapidity of their pace, the flare of their torches, the gleam of their eyes through their masks, and their sable garb, give them a kind of supernatural appearance. I return to bed, and fall asleep amidst the

Library of Congress

shouts of people returning from the opera, singing as they go snatches of the music with which they had been entertained during the evening.

Such is a picture of what passes every day at Florence—in Pisa, on the contrary, all is stagnation and repose—even the presence of the sovereign, who usually passes a part of 34 the winter here, is incompetent to give a momentary liveliness to the place. The city is nearly as large as Florence, with not a third of its population; the number of strangers is few; most of them are invalids, and the rest are the quietest people in the world. The rattle of carriages is rarely heard in the streets; in some of which there prevails a stillness so complete that you might imagine them deserted of their inhabitants. I have now been here three weeks, and on one occasion only have I seen the people of the place awakened to something like animation. It was the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin; the Lung' Arno was strewn with boughs of laurel and myrtle, and the Pisan gentry promenaded for an hour under my window.

On my leaving Florence an incident occurred, which will illustrate the manner of doing public business in this country. I had obtained my passport from the Police Office, *viséd* for Pisa. It was then Friday, and I was told that it would answer until ten o'clock on Tuesday morning. Unluckily I did not present myself at the Leghorn gate of Florence until eleven o'clock on that day. A young man in a military hat, sword, and blue uniform, came to the carriage and asked for my passport, which I handed him. In a short time he appeared again and desired me to get out and go with him to the apartment in the side of the gate. I went and saw a middle-aged man dressed in the same manner, sitting at the table with my passport before him. "I am sorry," said he, "to say that your passport is 35 not regular, and that my duty compels me to detain you." "What is the matter with the passport?" "The visé is of more than three days standing." I exerted all my eloquence to persuade him that an hour was of no consequence, and that the public welfare would not suffer by letting me pass, but he remained firm. "The law," he said, "is positive; I am compelled to execute it.

Library of Congress

If I were to suffer you to depart, and my superiors were to know it, I should lose my office and incur the penalty of five days' imprisonment."

I happened to have a few coins in my pocket, and putting in my hand, I caused them to jingle a little against each other. "Your case is a hard one," said the officer, "I suppose you are desirous to get on." "Yes—my preparations are all made, and it will be a great inconvenience for me to remain." "What say you," he called out to his companion who stood in the door looking into the street, "shall we let them pass? They seem to be decent people." The young man mumbled some sort of answer. "Here," said the officer, holding out to me my passport, but still keeping it between his thumb and finger, "I give you back your passport, and consent to your leaving Florence, but I wish you particularly to consider that in so doing, I risk the loss of my place and an imprisonment of five days." He then put the paper into my hand, and I put into his the expected gratuity. As I went to the carriage, he followed and begged me to say nothing of the 36 matter to any one. I was admitted into Pisa with less difficulty. It was already dark; I expected that my baggage would undergo a long examination as usual; and I knew that I had some dutiable articles. To my astonishment, however; my trunks were allowed to pass without being opened, or even the payment of the customary gratuity. I was told afterwards that my Italian servant had effected this by telling the custom-house officers some lie about my being the American Minister.

Pisa has a delightful winter climate, though Madame de Staël has left on record a condemnation of it, having passed here a season of unusually bad weather. Orange and lemon trees grow in the open air, and are now loaded with ripe fruit. The fields in the environs are green with grass nourished by abundant rains, and are spotted with daisies in blossom. Crops of flax and various kinds of pulse are showing themselves above the ground, a circumstance sufficient to show that the cultivators expect nothing like what we call winter.

LETTER V. PRACTICES OF THE ITALIAN COURTS.

Florence, *May* 12, 1835.

Night before last, a man-child was born. to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and yesterday was a day of great rejoicing in consequence. The five hundred bells of Florence kept up a horrid ringing through the day, and in the evening the public edifices and many private houses were illuminated. To-day and to-morrow the rejoicings continue, and in the mean time the galleries and museums are closed, lest idle people should amuse themselves rationally. The Tuscans are pleased with the birth of an heir to the Dukedom, first because the succession is likely to be kept in a good sort of a family, and secondly because for want of male children it would have reverted to the House of Austria, and the province would have been governed by a foreigner. I am glad of it, also, for the sake of the poor Tuscans, who are a mild people, and if they must be under a despotism, deserve to live under a good-natured one.

An Austrian Prince, if he were to govern Tuscany as the Emperor governs the Lombardo-Venetian territory, would introduce a more just and efficient system of administering 4
38 the laws between man and man, but at the same time a more barbarous severity to political offenders. I saw at Volterra, last spring, four persons who were condemned at Florence for an alleged conspiracy against the state. They were walking with instruments of music in their hands, on the top of the fortress, which commands an extensive view of mountain, vale, and sea, including the lower Val d'Arno, and reaching to Leghorn, and even to Corsica. They were well-dressed, and I was assured their personal comfort was attended to. A different treatment is the fate of the state prisoners who languish in the dungeons of Austria. In Tuscany no man's life is taken for any offence whatever, and banishment is a common sentence against those who are deemed dangerous or intractable subjects. In all the other provinces a harsher system prevails. In Sardinia capital executions for political causes are frequent, and long and mysterious

Library of Congress

detentions are resorted to, as in Lombardy, with a view to strike, terror into the minds of a discontented people.

The royal family of Naples kill people by way of amusement. Prince Charles, a brother of the king, sometime in the month of April last, found an old man cutting myrtle twigs on some of the royal hunting-grounds of which he has the superintendence. He directed his attendants to seize the offender and tie him to a tree, and when they had done this ordered them to shoot him. This they refused, upon which he took a loaded musket from the hands of one of them, and with the greatest deliberation shot him dead upon the spot. His Royal Highness soon after set out for Rome to amuse himself with the ceremonies of the Holy Week, and to figure at the balls given by Torlonia and other Roman nobles, where he signalized himself by his attentions to the English ladies.

Of the truth of the story I have related I have been assured by several respectable persons in Naples. About the middle of May I was at the spot where the murder was said to have been committed. It was on the borders of the lake of Agnano. We reached it by a hollow winding road cut deep through the hills and rocks thousands of years ago. It was a pretty and solitary spot; a neat pavilion of the royal family stood on the shore, and the air was fragrant with the blossoms of the white clover and the innumerable flowers which the soil of Italy, for a short season before the summer heats and drought, pours forth so profusely. The lake is evidently the crater of an old volcano: it lies in a perfect bowl of hills, and the perpetual escape of gas, bubbling up through the water, shows that the process of chemical decomposition in the earth below has not yet ceased. Close by, in the side of the circular hill that surrounds the lake, stands the famous *Grotto del Cane*, closed with a door to enable the keeper to get a little money from the foreigners who come to visit it. You may be sure I was careful not to trim any of the myrtles with my penknife.

But to return to Tuscany—it is after all little better than an Austrian province, like the other countries of Italy. The 40 Grand Duke is a near relative of the Emperor; he has the rank of colonel in the Austrian service, and a treaty of offence and defence obliges him to

Library of Congress

take part in the wars of Austria to the extent of furnishing ten thousand soldiers. It is well understood that he is watched by the agents of the Austrian Government here, who form a sort of high police, to which he and his cabinet are subject, and that he would not venture upon any measure of national policy, nor even displace or appoint a minister, without the consent of Met ternich.

The birth of a son to the Grand Duke has been signalized, I have just learned, by a display of princely munificence. Five thousand crowns have been presented to the Archbishop who performed the ceremony of christening the child; the servants of the ducal household have received two months' wages, in addition to their usual salary; five hundred young women have received marriage portions of thirty crowns each; all the articles of property at the great pawnbroking establishments managed by government, pledged for a less sum than four livres, have been restored to the owners without payment; and finally, all persons confined for larceny and other offences of a less degree than homicide and other enormous crimes, have been liberated and turned loose upon society again. The Grand Duke can well afford to be generous, for from a million and three hundred thousand people he draws, by taxation, four millions of crowns annually, of which a million only is computed to be expended in the military and civil expenses of his government. The remainder is of course applied to keeping up the state of a prince and to the enriching of his family. He passes, you know, for one of the richest potentates in Europe. 4*

42

LETTER VI. VENICE.—THE TYROL.

Munich, *August* 6, 1835.

Since my last letter I have visited Venice, a city which realizes the old mythological fable of beauty born of the sea. I must confess, however, that my first feeling on entering it was that of disappointment. As we passed in our gondola out of the lagoons, up one of the numerous canals, which permeate the city in every direction in such a manner that

Library of Congress

it seems as if you could only pass your time either within doors or in a boat, the place appeared to me a vast assemblage of prisons surrounded with their moats, and I thought how weary I should soon grow of my island prison, and how glad to escape again to the main-land. But this feeling quickly gave way to delight and admiration, when I landed and surveyed the clean though narrow streets, never incommoded by dust nor disturbed by the noise and jostling of carriages and horses, by which you may pass to every part of the city—when I looked again at the rows of superb buildings, with their marble steps ascending out of the water of the canals, in which the gondolas were shooting by each other—when I stood in the 43 immense square of St. Mark, surrounded by palaces resting on arcades, under which the shops rival in splendor those of Paris, and crowds of the gay inhabitants of both sexes assemble towards evening and sit in groups before the doors of the coffee-houses—and when I gazed on the barbaric magnificence of the church of St. Mark and the Doge's palace, surrounded by the old emblems of the power of Venice, and overlooking the Adriatic, once the empire of the republic. The architecture of Venice has, to my eyes, something watery and oceanic in its aspect. Under the hands of Palladio, the Grecian orders seemed to borrow the lightness and airiness of the Gothic. As you look at the numerous windows and the multitude of columns which give a striated appearance to the fronts of the palaces, you think of stalactites and icicles, such as you might imagine to ornament the abodes of the water-gods and sea-nymphs. The only thing needed to complete the poetic illusion is transparency or brilliancy of color, and this is wholly wanting; for at Venice the whitest marble is soon clouded and blackened by the corrosion of the sea-air.

It is not my intention, however, to do so hackneyed a thing as to give a description of Venice. One thing, I must confess, seemed to me extraordinary: how this city, deprived as it is of the commerce which built it up from the shallows of the Adriatic, and upheld it so long and so proudly, should not have decayed even more rapidly than it has done. Trieste has drawn from it almost all its trade, and flourishes by its decline. I walked through the arsenal of Venice, which comprehends the Navy Yard, an enormous structure, with ranges

Library of Congress

of broad lofty roofs supported by massive portions of wall, and spacious dock-yards; the whole large enough to build and fit out a navy for the British empire. The pleasure-boats of Napoleon and his empress, and that of the present Viceroy, are there; but the ships of war belonging to the republic have mouldered away with the Bucentaur. I saw, however, two Austrian vessels, the same which had conveyed the Polish exiles to New York, lying under shelter in the docks, as if placed there to show who were the present masters of the place. It was melancholy to wander through the vast unoccupied spaces of this noble edifice, and to think what must have been the riches, the power, the prosperity, and the hopes of Venice at the time it was built, and what they are at the present moment. It seems almost impossible that any thing should take place to arrest the ruin which is gradually consuming this renowned city. Some writers have asserted that the lagoons around it are annually growing shallower by the depositions of earth brought down by streams from the land, that they must finally become marshes, and that their consequent insalubrity will drive the inhabitants from Yenice. I do not know bow this may be; but the other causes I have mentioned seem likely to produce nearly the same effect. I remembered, as these ideas passed through my mind, a passage in which one of the sacred poets foretells the desertion and desolation of Type, "the city that made itself glorious in the midst of the seas."

"Thy riches and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners and thy pilots, thy, calkers and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war that are in thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin."

I left this most pleasing of the Italian cities which I had seen, on the 24th of June, and took the road for the Tyrol. We passed through a level fertile country, formerly the territory of Venice, watered by the Piave, which ran blood in one of Bonaparte's battles. At evening we arrived at Ceneda, where our Italian poet Da Ponte was born, situated just at the base of the Alps, the rocky peaks and irregular spires of which, beautifully green with the showery season, rose in the background. Ceneda seems to have something of German cleanliness about it, and the floors of a very comfortable inn at which we stopped were

Library of Congress

of wood, the first we had seen in Italy, though common throughout the Tyrol and the rest of Germany. A troop of barelegged boys, just broke loose from school, whooping and swinging their books and slates in the air, passed under my window. Such a sight you will not see in southern Italy. The education of the people is neglected, except in those provinces which are under the government of Austria. It is a government severe and despotic enough in all conscience, but by providing the means of education for all classes, it is doing more than it is aware of to prepare them for the enjoyment of free institutions. In the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom, as it is called, there are few children who do not attend the public schools.

On leaving Ceneda, we entered a pass in the mountains, the gorge of which was occupied by the ancient town of Serravalle, resting on arcades, the architecture of which denoted that it was built during the middle ages. Near it I remarked an old castle, which formerly commanded the pass, one of the finest ruins of the kind I had ever seen. It had a considerable extent of battlemented wall in perfect preservation, and both that and its circular tower were so luxuriantly loaded with ivy that they seemed almost to have been cut out of the living verdure. As we proceeded we became aware how worthy this region was to be the birthplace of a poet. A rapid stream, a branch of the Piave, tinged of a light and somewhat turbid blue by the soil of the mountains, came tumbling and roaring down the narrow valley; perpendicular precipices rose on each side; and beyond, the gigantic brotherhood of the Alps, in two long files of steep pointed summits, divided by deep ravines, stretched away in the sunshine to the northeast. In the face of one the precipices by the way-side, a marble slab is fixed, informing the traveller that the road was opened by the late Emperor of Germany in the year 1830. We followed this romantic valley for a considerable distance, passing several little blue lakes lying in their granite basins, one of which is called the *Lago morto* or Dead Lake, from having no outlet for its waters. At length we began to ascend, by a winding road, the steep sides of the Alps—the prospect enlarging as we went, the mountain summits rising to sight around us, one behind another, some of them white with snow, over which the wind blew with a wintry keenness—deep

Library of Congress

valleys opening below us, and gulfs yawning between rocks over which old bridges were thrown—and solemn fir forests clothing the broad declivities. The farm-houses placed on these heights, instead of being of brick or stone, as in the plains and valleys below, were principally built of wood; the second story, which served for a barn, being encircled by a long gallery, and covered with a projecting roof of plank held down with large stones. We stopped at Venas, a wretched place with a wretched inn, the hostess of which showed us a chin swollen with the *goitre*, and ushered us into dirty comfortless rooms where we passed the night. When we awoke the rain was beating against the windows, and, on looking out, the forest and sides of the neighboring mountains, at a little height above us, appeared hoary with snow. We set out in the rain, but had not proceeded far before we heard the sleet striking against the windows of the carriage, and soon came to where the snow covered the ground to the depth of one or two inches. Continuing to ascend, we passed out of Italy and entered the Tyrol. The storm had ceased before we went through the first Tyrolese village, 48 and we could not help being struck with the change in the appearance of the inhabitants—the different costume, the less erect figures, the awkward gait, the lighter complexions, the neatly-kept habitations, and the absence of beggars. As we advanced, the clouds began to roll off from the landscape, disclosing here and there, through openings in their broad skirts as they swept along, glimpses of the profound valleys below us, and of the white sides and summits of mountains in the mid-sky above. At length the sun appeared, and revealed a prospect of such wildness, grandeur, and splendor as I had never before seen. Lofty peaks of the most fantastic shapes, with deep elefts between, sharp needles of rock, and overhanging crags, infinite in multitude, shot up everywhere around us, glistening in the new-fallen snow, with thin wreaths of mist creeping along their sides. At intervals, swollen torrents, looking at a distance like long trains of foam, came thundering down the mountains, and crossing the road, plunged into the verdant valleys which winded beneath. Beside the highway were fields of young grain, pressed to the ground with the snow; and in the meadows, ranunculuses of the size of roses, large yellow violets, and a thousand other Alpine flowers of the most brilliant hues, were peeping through their white. covering. We stopped to breakfast at a place called

Library of Congress

Landro, a solitary inn, in the midst of this grand scenery, with a little chapel beside it. The water from the dissolving snow was dropping merrily from the roof in a bright June 49 sun. We needed not to be told that we were in Germany, for we saw it plainly enough in the nicely-washed floor of the apartment into which we were shown, in the neat cupboard with the old prayer-book lying upon it, and in the general appearance of housewifery, a quality unknown in Italy; to say nothing of the evidence we had in the beer and tobacco-smoke of the travellers' room, and the guttural dialect and quiet tones of the guests.

From Landro we descended gradually into the beautiful valleys of the Tyrol, leaving the snow behind, though the white peaks of the mountains were continually in sight. At Bruneck, in an inn resplendent with neatness—so at least it seemed to our eyes accustomed to the negligence and dirt of Italian housekeeping—we had the first specimen of a German bed. It is narrow and short, and made so high at the head, by a number of huge square bolsters and pillows, that you rather sit than lie. The principal covering is a bag of down, very properly denominated the upper bed, and between this and the feather-bed below, the traveller is expected to pass the night. An asthmatic patient on a cold winter night might perhaps find such a couch tolerably comfortable, if he could prevent the narrow covering from slipping off on one side or the other. The next day we were afforded an opportunity of observing more closely the inhabitants of this singular region, by a festival, or holiday of some sort, which brought them into the roads in great numbers, arrayed in their best dresses—the men in 5 50 short jackets and small-clothes, with broad gay-colored suspenders over their waistcoats, and leathern belts ornamented with gold or silver leaf—the women in short petticoats composed of horizontal bands of different colors—and both sexes, for the most part, wearing broad-brimmed hats with hemispherical crowns, though there was a sugar-loaf variety much affected by the men, adorned with a band of lace and sometimes a knot of flowers. They are a robust, healthy-looking race, though they have an awkward stoop in the shoulders. But what struck me most forcibly was the devotional habits of the people. The Tyrolese might be cited as an illustration of the remark, that mountaineers are more habitually and profoundly religious than others.

Library of Congress

Persons of all sexes, young and old, whom we meet in the road, were repeating their prayers audibly. We passed a troop of old women, all in broad-brimmed hats and short gray petticoats, carrying long staves, one of whom held a bead-roll and gave out the prayers, to which the others made the responses in chorus. They looked at us so solemnly from under their broad brims, and marched along with so grave and deliberate a pace, that I could hardly help fancying that the wicked Austrians had caught a dozen elders of the respectable society of Friends, and put them in petticoats to punish them for their heresy. We afterward saw persons going to the labors of the day, or returning, telling their rosaries and saying their prayers as they went, as if their devotions had been their favorite 51 amusement. At regular intervals of about half a mile, we saw wooden crucifixes erected by the way-side, covered from the weather with little sheds, bearing the image of the Saviour, crowned with thorns and frightfully dashed with streaks and drops of red paint, to represent the blood that flowed from his wounds. The outer walls of the better kind of houses were ornamented with paintings in fresco, and the subjects of these were mostly sacred, such as the Virgin and Child, the Crucifixion, and the Ascension. The number of houses of worship was surprising; I do not mean spacious or stately churches such as we meet with in Italy, but most commonly little chapels dispersed so as best to accommodate the population. Of these the smallest neighborhood has one for the morning devotions of its inhabitants, and even the solitary inn has its little consecrated building with its miniature spire, for the convenience of pious wayfarers. At Sterzing, a little village beautifully situated at the base of the mountain called the Brenner, and containing, as I should judge, not more than two or three thousand inhabitants, we counted seven churches and chapels within the compass of a square mile. The observances of the Roman Catholic church are nowhere more rigidly complied with than in the Tyrol. When we stopped at Bruneck on Friday evening, I happened to drop a word about a little meat for dinner in a conversation with the spruce-looking landlady, who appeared so shocked that I gave up the point, on the promise of some excellent and 52 remarkably well-flavored trout from the stream that flowed through the village—a promise that was literally fulfilled. At the post-house on the Brenner, where we stopped on Saturday evening, we were absolutely refused any

Library of Congress

thing but soup-maigre and fish; the postmaster telling us that the priest had positively forbidden meat to be given to travellers. Think of that!—that we who had eaten wild-boar and pheasants on Good Friday, at Rome, under the very nostrils of the Pope himself and his whole conclave of Cardinals, should be refused a morsel of flesh on an ordinary Saturday, at a tavern on a lonely mountain in the Tyrol, by the orders of a parish priest! Before getting our soup-maigre. we witnessed another example of Tyrolese devotion. Eight or ten travellers, apparently laboring men, took possession of the entrance hall of the inn, and kneeling, poured forth their orisons in the German language for half an hour with no small appearance of fervency. In the morning when we were ready to set out, we inquired for our coachman, an Italian, and found that he too, although not remarkably religious, had caught something of the spirit of the place, and was at the *Gotteshaus*, as the waiter called the tavern chapel, offering his morning prayers.

We descended the Brenner on the 28th of June in a snow-storm, the wind whirling the light flakes in the air as it does with us in winter. It changed to rain, however, as we approached the beautiful and picturesque valley watered by the river Inn, on the banks of which stands the fine old 53 town of Innsbruck, the capital of the Tyrol. Here we visited the Church of the Holy Cross, in which is the bronze tomb. of Maximilian I. and twenty or thirty bronze statues ranged on each side of the nave, representing fierce warriorchiefs, and gowned prelates, and stately damsels of the middle ages. These are all curious for the costume; the warriors are eased in various kinds of ancient armor, and brandish various ancient weapons, and the robes of the females are flowing and by no means ungraceful. Almost every one of the statues has its hands and fingers in some constrained and awkward position; as if the artist knew as little what to do with them as some awkward and bashful people know what to do with their own. Such a crowd of figures in that ancient garb, occupying the floor in the midst of the living worshippers of the present day, has an, effect which at first is startling. From Innsbruck we climbed and crossed another mountain-ridge, scarcely less wild and majestic in its scenery than those we had left behind. On descending, we observed that the crucifixes had disappeared from the roads, and the

broad-brimmed and sugar-loaf hats from the heads of the peasantry; the men wore hats contracted in the middle of the crown like an hour-glass, and the women caps edged with a broad band of black fur, the frescoes on the outside of the houses became less frequent; in short it was apparent that we had entered a different region, even if the custom-house and police officers on the frontier had not signified to us that we were now in the 5* 54 kingdom of Bavaria. We passed through extensive forests of fir, here and there checkered with farms, and finally came to the broad elevated plain bathed by the Isar, in which Munich is situated.

55

LETTER VII. AN EXCURSION TO ROCK RIVER.

Princeton, Illinois, *June* 21, 1841.

I Have just returned from an excursion to Rock River, one of the most beautiful of our western streams.

We left Princeton on the 17th of the month, and after passing a belt of forest which conceals one of the branches of the Bureau River, found ourselves upon the wide, unfenced prairie, spreading away on every side until it met the horizon. Flocks of turtle-doves rose from our path scared at our approach; quails and rabbits were seen running before us; the prairie-squirrel, a little striped animal of the marmot kind, crossed the road; we started plovers by the dozen, and now and then a prairie-hen, which flew off heavily into the grassy wilderness. With these animals the open country is populous, but they have their pursuers and destroyers; not the settlers of the region, for they do not shoot often, except at a deer, or a wild turkey, or a noxious animal; but the prairie-hawk, the bald-eagle, the mink, and the prairie-wolf, which make merciless havoc among them and their brood.

Fifteen miles beyond we came to Dad Joe's Grove, in the 56 shadow of which, thirteen years ago, a settler named Joe Smith, who had fought in the battle of the Thames, one of

Library of Congress

the first white inhabitants of this region, seated himself, and planted his corn, and gathered his crops quietly, through the whole Indian war, without being molested by the savages, though he was careful to lead his wife and family to a place of security. As Smith was a settler of such long standing, he was looked to as a kind of patriarch in the county, and to distinguish him from other Joe Smiths, he received the venerable appellation of Dad. He has since removed to another part of the state, but his wellknown, hospitable cabin, inhabited by another inmate, is still there, and his grove of tall trees, standing on a ridge amidst the immense savannahs, yet retains his name. As we descended into the prairie we were struck with the novelty and beauty of the prospect which lay before us. The ground sank gradually and gently into a low but immense basin, in the midst of which lies the marshy tract called the Winnebago Swamp. To the northeast the sight was intercepted by a forest in the midst of the basin, but to the northwest the prairies were seen swelling up again in the smoothest slopes to their usual height, and stretching away to a distance so vast that it seemed boldness in the eye to follow them.

The Winnebagoes and other Indian tribes which formerly possessed this country have left few memorials of their existence, except the names of places. Now and then, as 57 at Indiantown, near Princeton, you are shown the holes in the ground where they stored their maize, and sometimes on the borders of the rivers you see the trunks of trees which they felled, evidently hacked by their tomahawks, but perhaps the most remarkable of their remains are the paths across the prairies or beside the large streams, called Indian trails—narrow and well-beaten ways, sometimes a foot in depth, and many of them doubtless trodden for hundreds of years.

As we went down the ridge upon which stands Dad Joe's Grove, we saw many boulders of rock lying on the surface of the soil of the prairies. The western people, naturally puzzled to tell how they came there, give them the expressive name of "lost rocks." We entered a forest of scattered oaks, and after travelling for half an hour reached the Winnebago Swamp, a tract covered with tall and luxuriant water-grass, which we crossed on a causey built by a settler who keeps a toll-gate, and at the end of the causey we forded

Library of Congress

a small stream called Winnebago Inlet. Crossing another vast prairie we reached the neighborhood of Dixon, the approach to which was denoted by groves, farm-houses, herds of cattle, and inclosed corn fields, checkering the broad green prairie.

Dixon, named after an ancient settler of the place still living, is a country town situated on a high bank of Rock River. Five years ago two log-cabins only stood on the solitary shore, and now it is a considerable village, with 58 many neat dwellings, a commodious court-house, several places of worship for the good people, and a jail for the rogues, built with a triple wall of massive logs, but I was glad to see that it had no inmate.

Rock River flows through high prairies, and not, like most streams of the West, through an alluvial country. The current is rapid, and the pellucid waters glide over a bottom of sand and pebbles. Its admirers declare that its shores unite the beauties of the Hudson and of the Connecticut. The banks on either side are high and bold; sometimes they are perpendicular precipices, the base of which stands in the running water; sometimes they are steep grassy or rocky bluffs, with a space of dry alluvial land between them and the stream; sometimes they rise by a gradual and easy ascent to the general level of the region, and sometimes this ascent is interrupted by a broad natural terrace. Majestic trees grow solitary or in clumps on the grassy acclivities, or scattered in natural parks along the lower lands upon the river, or in thick groves along the edge of the high country. Back of the bluffs, extends a fine agricultural region, rich prairies with an undulating surface, interspersed with groves. At the foot of the bluffs break forth copious springs of clear water, which hasten in little brooks to the river. In a drive which I took up the left bank of the river, I saw three of these in the space of as many miles. One of these is the spring which supplies the town of Dixon with water; the next is a beautiful fountain 59 rushing out from the rocks in the midst of a clump of trees, as merrily and in as great a hurry as a boy let out of school; the third is so remarkable as to have received a name. It is a little rivulet issuing from a cavern six or seven feet high, and about twenty from the entrance to the

Library of Congress

further end, at the foot of a perpendicular precipice covered with forest-trees and fringed with bushes.

In the neighborhood of Dixon, a class of emigrants have established themselves, more opulent and more luxurious in their tastes than most of the settlers of the western country. Some of these have built elegant mansions on the left bank of the river, amidst the noble trees which seem to have grown up for that very purpose. Indeed, when I looked at them, I could hardly persuade myself that they had not been planted to overshadow older habitations. From the door of one of these dwellings I surveyed a prospect of exceeding beauty. The windings of the river allowed us a sight of its waters and its beautifully diversified banks to a great distance each way, and in one direction a high prairie region was seen above the woods that fringed the course of this river, of a lighter green than they, and touched with the golden light of the setting sun.

I am told that the character of Rock River is, throughout its course, much as I have described it in the neighborhood of Dixon, that its banks are high and free from marshes, and its waters rapid and clear, from its source in Wisconsin to where it enters the Mississippi amidst rocky islands. 60 What should make its shores unhealthy I can not see, yet they who inhabit them are much subject to intermittent fevers. They tell you very quietly that every body who comes to live there must take a seasoning. I suppose that when this country becomes settled this will no longer be the case. Rock River is not much subject to inundations, nor do its waters become very low in summer. A project is on foot, I am told, to navigate it with steam-vessels of a light draught.

When I arrived at Dixon I was told that the day before a man named Bridge, living at Washington Grove, in Ogle county, came into town and complained that he had received notice from a certain association that he must leave the county before the seventeenth of the month, or that he would be looked upon as a proper subject for Lynch law. He asked for assistance to defend his person and dwelling against the lawless violence of these men. The people of Dixon county came together and passed a resolution to the

Library of Congress

effect, that they approved fully of what the inhabitants of Ogle county had done, and that they allowed Mr. Bridge the term of four hours to depart from the town of Dixon. He went away immediately, and in great trepidation. This Bridge is a notorious confederate and harbinger of horse-thieves and counterfeiters. The thinly-settled portions of Illinois are much exposed to the depredations of horse-thieves, who have a kind of centre of operations in Ogle county, where it is said that they have a justice of the peace and a constable among their own associates, and where they contrive to secure a friend on the jury whenever any one of their number is tried. Trial after trial had taken place, and it had been found impossible to obtain a conviction on the clearest evidence, until last April, when, two horse-thieves being on trial, eleven of the jury threatened the twelfth with a taste of the cowskin unless he would bring in a verdict of guilty. He did so, and the men were condemned. Before they were removed to the state-prison, the court-house was burnt down and the jail was in flames, but luckily they were extinguished without the liberation of the prisoners. Such at length became the general feeling of insecurity, that three hundred citizens of Ogle county, as I understand, have formed themselves into a company of volunteers for the purpose of clearing the county of these men. Two horse-thieves have been seized and flogged, and Bridge, their patron, has been ordered to remove or abide the consequences.

As we were returning from Dixon on the morning of the 19th, we heard a kind of humming noise in the grass, which one of the company said proceeded from a rattlesnake. We dismounted and found that in fact it was made by a prairie-rattlesnake, which lay coiled around a tuft of herbage, and which we soon dispatched. The Indians call this small variety of the rattlesnake, the Massasauger. Horses are frequently bitten by it and come to the doors of their owners with their heads horribly swelled, but they are recovered by the application of hartshorn. A little further on, one of the party raised the cry of wolf, and looking we saw a prairie-wolf in the path before us, a prick-eared animal of a reddish-gray color, standing and gazing at us with great composure. As we approached, he trotted

Library of Congress

off into the grass, with his nose near the ground, not deigning to hasten his pace for our shouts, and shortly afterward we saw two others running in a different direction.

The prairie-wolf is not so formidable an animal as the name of wolf would seem to denote; he is quite as great a coward as robber, but he is exceedingly mischievous. He never takes full-grown sheep unless he goes with a strong troop of his friends, but seizes young lambs, carries off sucking-pigs, robs the henroost, devours sweet corn in the gardens, and plunders the water-melon patch. A herd of prairie-wolves will enter a field of melons and quarrel about the division of the spoils as fiercely and noisily as so many politicians. It is their way to gnaw a hole immediately into the first melon they lay hold of. If it happens to be ripe, the inside is devoured at once, if not, it is dropped and another is sought out, and a quarrel is picked with the discoverer of a ripe one, and loud and shrill is the barking, and fierce the growling and snapping which is heard on these occasions. It is surprising, I am told, with what dexterity a wolf will make the most of a melon, absorbing every remnant of the pulp, and hollowing it out as clean as it could be scraped by a spoon. This is when the allowance of 63 melons is scarce, but when they are abundant he is as careless and wasteful as a government agent.

Enough of natural history. I will finish my letter another day.

June 26 th.

Let me caution all emigrants to Illinois not to handle too familiarly the "wild parsnip," as it is commonly called, an umbelliferous plant growing in the moist prairies of this region. I have handled it and have paid dearly for it, having such a swelled face that I could scarcely see for several days.

The regulators of Ogle county removed Bridge's family on Monday last and demolished his house. He made preparations to defend himself, and kept twenty armed men about him for two days, but thinking, at last, that the regulators did not mean to carry their threats into effect, he dismissed them. He has taken refuge with his friends, the Aikin family, who live,

I believe, in Jefferson Grove, in the same county, and who, it is said, have also received notice to quit.

64

LETTER VIII. EXAMPLES OF LYNCH LAW.

Princeton, Illinois, *July 2*, 1841.

In my last letter I mentioned that the regulators in Ogle county, on Rock River, in this state, had pulled down the house of one Bridge, living at Washington Grove, a well-known confederate of the horse-thieves and coiners with which this region is infested.

Horse-thieves are numerous in this part of the country. A great number of horses are bred here; you see large herds of them feeding in the open prairies, and at this season of the year every full-grown mare has a colt running by her side. Most of the thefts are committed early in the spring, when the grass begins to shoot, and the horses are turned out on the prairie, and the thieves, having had little or no employment during the winter, are needy; or else in the autumn, when the animals are kept near the dwellings of their owners to be fed with Indian corn and are in excellent order, The thieves select the best from the drove, and these are passed from one station to another till they arrive at some distant market where they are sold. It is said that they have their regular lines of communication 65 from Wisconsin to St. Louis, and from the Wabash to the Mississippi, In Ogle county they seem to have been bolder than elsewhere, and more successful, notwithstanding the notoriety of their crimes, in avoiding punishment. The impossibility of punishing them by process of law, the burning of the court-house at Oregon City last April, and the threats of deadly vengeance thrown out by them against such as should attempt to bring them to justice, led to the formation of a company of citizens, "regulators" they call themselves, who resolved to take the law into their own hands and drive the felons from the neighborhood. This is not the first instance of the kind which has happened in Illinois. Some twenty years since the southern counties contained a gang of horse-thieves, so numerous and well-organized as

Library of Congress

to defy punishment by legal means, and they were expelled by the same method which is now adopted in Ogle county.

I have just learned, since I wrote the last sentence, that the society of regulators includes, not only the county of Ogle, but those of De Kalb and Winnebago, where the depredations of the horse-thieves and the perfect impunity with which they manage to exercise their calling, have exhausted the patience of the inhabitants. In those counties, as well as in Ogle, their patrons live at some of the finest groves, where they own large farms. Ten or twenty stolen horses will be brought to one of these places of a night, and before sunrise the desperadoes employed to steal them are 6* 66 again mounted and on their way to some other station. In breaking up these haunts, the regulators, I understand, have proceeded with some of the formalities commonly used in administering justice. The accused party has been allowed to make his defense, and witnesses have been examined both for and against him

These proceedings, however, have lately suffered a most tragical interruption. Not long after Bridge's house was pulled down, two men, mounted and carrying rifles, called at the dwelling of a Mr Campbell, living at Whiterock Grove, in Ogle county, who belonged to the company of regulators, and who had acted as the messenger to convey to Bridge the order to leave the county. Meeting Mrs. Campbell without the house, they told her that they wished to speak to her husband. Campbell made his appearance at the door and immediately both the men fired. He fell mortally wounded and lived but a few minutes. "You have killed my husband," said Mrs. Campbell to one of the murderers whose name was Driscoll. Upon this they rode off at full speed.

As soon as the event was known the whole country was roused, and every man who was not an associate of the horse-thieves, shouldered his rifle to go in pursuit of the murderers. They apprehended the father of Driscoll, a man nearly seventy years of age, and one of his sons, William Driscoll, the former a reputed horse-thief, and the latter, a man who had hitherto borne a tolerably fair character; 67 and subjected them to a separate examination.

Library of Congress

The father was wary in his answers, and put on the appearance of perfect innocence, but William Driscoll was greatly agitated, and confessed that he, with his father and others, had planned the murder of Campbell, and that David Driscoll, his brother, together with another associate, was employed to execute it. The father and son were then sentenced to death; they were bound and made to kneel; about fifty men took aim at each, and, in three hours from the time they were taken, they were dead men. A pit was dug on the spot where they fell, in the midst of a prairie near their dwelling; their corpses, pierced with bullet-holes in every part, were thrown in, and the earth was heaped over them.

The pursuit of David Driscoll and the fellow who was with him when Campbell was killed, is still going on with great activity. More than a hundred men are traversing the country in different directions, determined that no lurking-place shall hide them. In the mean time various persons who have the reputation of being confederates of horse-thieves, not only in Ogle county, but in the adjoining ones, even in this, have received notice from the regulators that they cannot be allowed to remain in this part of the state. Several suspicious-looking men, supposed to be fugitives from Ogle county, have been seen, within a few days past, lurking in the woods not far from this place. One of them who was seen the day before yesterday evidently thought of himself pursued and slunk from sight; he was followed, but escaped in the thickets leaving a bundle of clothing behind him.

Samonok, Kane County, Illinois, *July 5th*.

I have just heard that another of the Driscolls has been shot by the regulators. Whether it was David, who fired at Campbell, or one of his brothers, I can not learn.

69

LETTER IX. RICHMOND IN VIRGINIA.

Richmond, Virginia, *March 2, 1843*.

Library of Congress

I Arrived at this place last night from Washington, where I had observed little worth describing. The statue of our first President, by Greenough, was, of course, one of the things which I took an early opportunity of looking at, and although the bad light in which it is placed prevents the spectator from properly appreciating the features, I could not help seeing with satisfaction, that no position, however unfavorable, could impair the majesty of that noble work, or, at all events, destroy its grand general effect.

The House of Representatives I had not seen since 1832, and I perceived that the proceedings were conducted with less apparent decorum than formerly, and that the members no longer sat with their hats on. Whether they had come to the conclusion that it was well to sit uncovered, in order to make up, by this token of mutual respect, for the too frequent want of decorum in their proceedings, or whether the change has been made because it so often happens that all the members are talking together, the rule being that the person speaking must be bareheaded, or whether, finally, it was found, during the late long summer sessions, that a hat made the wearer really uncomfortable, are questions which I asked on the spot, but to which I got no satisfactory answer. I visited the Senate Chamber, and saw a member of that dignified body, as somebody calls it, in preparing to make a speech, blow his nose with his thumb and finger without the intervention of a pocket-handkerchief. The speech, after this graceful preliminary, did not, I confess, disappoint me.

Whoever goes to Washington should by all means see the Museum at the Patent Office, enriched by the collections lately brought back by the expedition sent out to explore the Pacific. I was surprised at the extent and variety of these collections. Dresses, weapons, and domestic implements of savage nations, in such abundance as to leave, one would almost think, their little tribes disfurnished; birds of strange shape and plumage; fishes of remote waters; whole groves of different kinds of coral, sea-shells of rare form and singular beauty from the most distant shores; mummies from the caves of Peru; curious minerals and plants: whoever is interested by such objects as these should

Library of Congress

give the museum a more leisurely examination than I had time to do. The persons engaged in arranging and putting up these collections were still at their task when I was at Washington, and I learned that what I saw was by no means the whole.

The night before we set out, snow fell to the depth of 71 three inches, and as the steamboat passed down the Potomac, we saw, at sunrise, the grounds of Mount Vernon lying in a covering of the purest white, the snow, scattered in patches on the thick foliage of cedars that skirt the river, looking like clusters of blossoms. About twelve, the steamboat came to land, and the railway took us through a gorge of the woody hills that skirt the Potomac. In about an hour, we were at Fredericksburg, on the Rappahannock. The day was bright and cold, and the wind keen and cutting. A crowd of negroes came about the cars, with cakes, fruit, and other refreshments. The poor fellows seemed collapsed with the unusual cold; their faces and lips were of the color which drapers call blue-black.

As we proceeded southward in Virginia, the snow gradually became thinner and finally disappeared altogether. It was impossible to mistake the region in which we were. Broad inclosures were around us, with signs of extensive and superficial cultivation; large dwellings were seen at a distance from each other, and each with its group of smaller buildings, looking as solitary and chilly as French chateaus; and, now and then, we saw a gang of negroes at work in the fields, though oftener we passed miles without the sight of a living creature. At six in the afternoon, we arrived at Richmond.

A beautiful city is Richmond, seated on the hills that overlook the James River. The dwellings have a pleasant appearance, often standing by themselves in the midst of 72 gardens, In front of several, I saw large magnolias, their dark, glazed leaves glittering in. the March sunshine. The river, as yellow as the Tiber, its waters now stained with the earth of the upper country, runs by the upper part of the town in noisy rapids, embracing several islands, shaded with the plane-tree, the hackberry, and the elm, and prolific, in spring and summer, of wild-flowers. I went upon one of these islands, by means of a foot-bridge, and was pointed to another, the resort of a quoit-club comprising some of the most

Library of Congress

distinguished men of Richmond, among whom in his lifetime was Judge Marshall, who sometimes joined in this athletic sport. We descended one of the hills on which the town is built, and went up another to the east, where stands an ancient house of religious worship, the oldest Episcopal church in the state. It is in the midst of a burying-ground, where sleep some of the founders of the colony, whose old graves are greenly overgrown with the trailing and matted periwinkle. In this church, Patrick Henry, at the commencement of the American Revolution, made that celebrated speech, which so vehemently moved all who heard him, ending with the sentence: "Give me liberty or give me death." We looked in at one of the windows; it is a low, plain room, with small, square pews, and a sounding board over the little pulpit. From the hill on which this church stands, you have a beautiful view of the surrounding country, a gently undulating surface, closed in by hills on the west; and the James River is seen wandering through it, by distant plantations, and between borders of trees. A place was pointed out to us, a little way down the river, which bears the name of Powhatan; and here, I was told, a flat rock is still shown as the one on which Captain Smith was placed by his captors, in order to be put to death, when the intercession of Pocahontas saved his life.

I went with an acquaintance to see the inspection and sale of tobacco. Huge, upright columns of dried leaves, firmly packed and of a greenish hue, stood in rows, under the roof of a broad, low building, open on all sides—these were the hogsheads of tobacco, stripped of the staves. The inspector, a portly man, with a Bourbon face, his white hair gathered in a tie behind, went very quietly and expeditiously through his task of determining the quality, after which the vast bulks were disposed of, in a very short time, with surprisingly little noise, to the tobacco merchants. Tobacco, to the value of three millions of dollars annually, is sent by the planters to Richmond, and thence distributed to different nations, whose merchants frequent this mart. In the sales it is always sure to bring cash, which, to those who detest the weed, is a little difficult to understand.

I went afterwards to a tobacco factory, the sight of which amused me, though the narcotic fumes made me cough. In one room a black man was taking apart the small bundles of

Library of Congress

leaves of which a hogshead of tobacco is composed, and carefully separating leaf from leaf; others were 7 74 assorting the leaves according to the quality, and others again were arranging the leaves in layers and sprinkling each layer with the extract of liquorice. In another room were about eighty negroes, boys they are called, from the age of twelve years up to manhood, who received the leaves thus prepared, rolled them into long even rolls, and then cut them into plugs of about four inches in length, which were afterwards passed through a press, and thus became ready for market, As we entered the room we heard a murmur of psalmody running through the sable assembly, which now and then swelled into a strain of very tolerable music.

“Verse sweetens toil—”

says the stanza which Dr. Johnson was so fond of quoting, and really it is so good that I will transcribe the whole of it—

“Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound— All at her work the village maiden sings, Nor, while she turns the giddy wheel around, Revolves the sad vicissitudes of things.”

Verse it seems can sweeten the toil of slaves in a tobacco factory.

“We encourage their singing as much as we can,” said the brother of the proprietor, himself a diligent masticator of the weed, who attended us, and politely explained to us the process of making plug tobacco; “we encourage it as

EDINBURGH FROM CRAIG MILLAR CASTLE

75 much as we can, for the boys work better while singing. Sometimes they will sing all day long with great spirit; at other times you will not hear a single note. They must sing wholly of their own accord, it is of no use to bid them do it.”

“What is remarkable,” he continued, “their tunes are all psalm tunes, and the words are from hymn-books; their taste is exclusively for sacred music; they will sing nothing else.

Library of Congress

Almost all these persons are church-members; we have not a dozen about the factory who are not so. Most of them are of the Baptist persuasion; a few are Methodists.”

I saw in the course of the day the Baptist church in which these people worship, a low, plain, but spacious brick building, the same in which the sages of Virginia, a generation of great men, debated the provisions of the constitution. It has a congregation of twenty-seven hundred persons, and the best choir, I heard somebody say, in all Richmond. Near it is the Monumental church, erected on the site of the Richmond theatre, after the terrible fire which carried mourning into so many families.

In passing through an old part of Main-street, I was shown an ancient stone cottage of rude architecture and humble dimensions, which was once the best hotel in Richmond. Here, I was told, there are those in Richmond who remember dining with General Washington, Judge Marshall, and their cotemporaries. I could not help 76 comparing it with the palace-like building put up at Richmond within two or three years past, named the Exchange Hotel, with its spacious parlors, its long dining-rooms, its airy dormitories, and its ample halls and passages, echoing to the steps of busy waiters, and guests coming and departing. The Exchange Hotel is one of the finest buildings for its purpose in the United States, and is extremely well-kept.

I paid a visit to the capitol, nobly situated on an eminence which overlooks the city, and is planted with trees. The statue of Washington, executed by Houdon for the state of Virginia, in 1788, is here. It is of the size of life, representing Gen. Washington in the costume of his day, and in an ordinary standing posture. It gratifies curiosity, but raises no particular moral emotion. Compared with the statue by Greenough, it presents a good example of the difference between the work of a mere sculptor—skillful indeed, but still a mere sculptor—and the work of a man of genius.

I shall shortly set out for Charleston, South Carolina.

LETTER X. A JOURNEY FROM RICHMOND TO CHARLESTON.

Charleston, *March* 6, 1843.

I Left Richmond, on the afternoon of a keen March day, in the railway train for Petersburg, where we arrived after dark, and, therefore, could form no judgment of the appearance of the town. Here we were transferred to another train of cars. Among the passengers was a lecturer on Mesmerism, with his wife, and a young woman who accompanied them as a mesmeric subject. The young woman, accustomed to be easily put to sleep, seemed to get through the night very comfortably; but the spouse of the operator appeared to be much disturbed by the frequent and capricious opening of the door by the other passengers, which let in torrents of intensely cold air from without, and chid the offenders with a wholesome sharpness.

About two o'clock in the morning, we reached Blakely on the Roanoke, where we were made to get out of the cars, and were marched in long procession for about a quarter of a mile down to the river. A negro walked before us to light our way, bearing a blazing pine torch, which scattered sparks like a steam-engine, and a crowd of negroes 7* 78 followed us, bearing our baggage. We went down a steep path to the Roanoke, where we found a little old steamboat ready for us, and in about fifteen minutes were struggling upward against the muddy and rapid current. In little more than an hour, we had proceeded two miles and a half up the river, and were landed at a place called Weldon. Here we took the cars for Wilmington, in North Carolina, and shabby vehicles they were, denoting our arrival in a milder climate, by being extremely uncomfortable for cold weather. As morning dawned, we saw ourselves in the midst of the pine forests of North Carolina. Vast tracts of level sand, overgrown with the long-leaved pine, a tall, stately tree, with sparse and thick twigs, ending in long brushes of leaves, murmuring in the strong cold wind, extended everywhere around us. At great distances from each other, we passed log-houses, and sometimes a dwelling of more pretensions, with a piazza, and here and there fields in which cotton or maize had been planted last year, or an orchard with a few small mossy

Library of Congress

trees. The pools beside the roads were covered with ice just formed, and the negroes, who like a good fire at almost any season of the year, and who find an abundant supply of the finest fuel in these forests, had made blazing fires of the resinous wood of the pine, wherever they were at work. The tracts of sandy soil, we perceived, were interspersed with marshes, crowded with cypress-trees, and verdant at their borders with a growth of evergreens, such as the swamp-bay, the gallberry, 79 the holly, and various kinds of evergreen creepers, which are unknown to our northern climate, and which became more frequent as we proceeded.

We passed through extensive forests of pine, which had been *boxed*, as it is called, for the collection of turpentine. Every tree had been scored by the axe upon one of its sides, some of them as high as the arm could reach down to the roots, and the broad wound was covered with the turpentine, which seems to saturate every fibre of the long-leaved pine. Sometimes we saw large flakes or crusts of the turpentine, of a light-yellow color, which had fallen, and lay beside the tree on the ground. The collection of turpentine is a work of destruction; it strips acre aft acre of these noble trees, and, if it goes on, the time is not far distant when the long-leaved pine will become nearly extinct in this region, which is so sterile as hardly to be fitted for producing any thing else. We saw large tracts covered with the standing trunks of trees already killed by it; and other tracts beside them had been freshly attacked by the spoiler. I am told that the tree which grows up when the long-leaved pine is destroyed, is the loblolly pine, or, as it is sometimes called, the short-leaved pine, a tree of very inferior quality and in little esteem.

About half-past two in the afternoon, we came to Wilmington, a little town built upon the white sands of Cape Fear, some of the houses standing where not a blade of grass or other plant can grow. A few evergreen oaks, in 80 places, pleasantly overhang the water. Here we took the steamer for Charleston.

I may as well mention here a fraud which is sometimes practiced upon those who go by this route to Charleston. Advertisements are distributed at New York and elsewhere,

Library of Congress

informing the public that the fare from Baltimore to Charleston, by the railway through Washington and Richmond, is but twenty-two dollars. I took the railway, paying from place to place as I went, and found that this was a falsehood; I was made to pay seven or eight dollars more. In the course of my journey, I was told that, to protect myself from this imposition, I should have purchased at Baltimore a "through ticket," as it is called; that is, should have paid in advance for the whole distance; but the advertisement did not inform me that this was necessary. No wonder that "tricks upon travellers" should have become a proverbial expression, for they are a much-enduring race, more or less plundered in every part of the world.

The next morning, at eight o'clock, we found ourselves entering Charleston harbor; Sullivan's Island, with Fort Moultrie, breathing recollections of the revolution, on our right; James Island on our left; in front, the stately dwellings of the town, and all around, on the land side, the horizon bounded by an apparent belt of evergreens—the live-oak, the water-oak, the palmetto, the pine, and, planted about the dwellings, the magnolia and the wild orange—giving to the scene a summer aspect. The city of Charleston strikes the visitor from the north most agreeably. He perceives at once that he is in a different climate. The spacious houses are surrounded with broad piazzas, often a piazza to each story, for the sake of shade and coolness, and each house generally stands by itself in a garden planted with trees and shrubs, many of which preserve their verdure through the winter. We saw early flowers already opening; the peach and plum-tree were in full bloom; and the wild orange, as they call the cherry-laurel, was just putting forth its blossoms. The buildings—some with stuccoed walls, some built of large dark-red bricks, and some of wood—are not kept fresh with paint like ours, but are allowed to become weather-stained by the humid climate, like those of the European towns. The streets are broad and quiet, unpaved in some parts, but in none, as with us, offensive both to sight and smell. The public buildings are numerous for the size of the city, and well-built in general, with sufficient space about them to give them a noble aspect, and all the advantage which they could derive from their architecture. The inhabitants, judging from what I have seen of them, which is not

much, I confess, do not appear undeserving of the character which has been given them, of possessing the most polished and agreeable manners of all the American cities.

I may shortly write you again from the interior of South Carolina.

82

LETTER XI. THE INTERIOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA.—A CORN-SHUCKING.

Barnwell District, South Carolina, *March* 29, 1843.

Since I last wrote, I have passed three weeks in the interior of South Carolina; visited Columbia, the capital of the state, a pretty town; roamed over a considerable part of Barnwell district, with some part of the neighboring one of Orangeburg; enjoyed the hospitality of the planters— very agreeable and intelligent men; been out in a racoon hunt; been present at a corn-shucking; listened to negro ballads, negro jokes, and the banjo; witnessed negro dances; seen two alligators at least, and eaten bushels of hominy.

Whoever comes out on the railroad to this district, a distance of seventy miles or more, if he were to judge only by what he sees in his passage, might naturally take South Carolina for a vast pine-forest, with here and there a clearing made by some enterprising settler, and would wonder where the cotton which clothes so many millions of the human race, is produced. The railway keeps on a tract of sterile sand, overgrown with pines; passing, here and there, along the edge of a morass, or crossing a stream of yellow 83 water. A lonely log-house under these old trees, is a sight for sore eyes; and only two or three plantations, properly so called, meet the eye in the whole distance. The cultivated and more productive lands lie apart from this tract, near streams, and interspersed with more frequent ponds and marshes. Here you find plantations comprising several thousands of acres, a considerable part of which always lies in forest; cotton and corn fields of vast extent, and a negro village on every plantation, at a respectful distance from the habitation of the proprietor. Evergreen trees of the oak family and others, which I mentioned in my last letter, are generally planted about the mansions. Some of them are surrounded with

Library of Congress

dreary clearings, full of the standing trunks of dead pines; others are pleasantly situated in the edge of woods, intersected by winding paths. A ramble, or a ride—a ride on a hand-gallop it should be—in these pine woods, on a fine March day, when the weather has all the spirit of our March days without its severity, is one of the most delightful recreations in the world. The paths are upon a white sand, which, when not frequently travelled, is very firm under foot; on all sides you are surrounded by noble stems of trees, towering to an immense height, from whose summits, far above you, the wind is drawing deep and grand harmonies; and often your way is beside a marsh, verdant with magnolias, where the yellow jessamine, now in flower, fills the air with fragrance, and the bamboo-briar, an evergreen creeper, twines itself with various other 84 plants, which never shed their leaves in winter. These woods abound in game, which, you will believe me when I say, I had rather start than shoot,—flocks of turtle-doves, rabbits rising and scudding before you; bevvies of quails, partridges they call them here, chirping almost under your horse's feet; wild ducks swimming in the pools, and wild turkeys, which are frequently shot by the practiced sportsman.

But you must hear of the corn-shucking. The one at which I was present was given on purpose that I might witness the humors of the Carolina negroes. A huge fire of *light-wood* was made near the corn-house. Light-wood is the wood of the long-leaved pine, and is so called, not because it is light, for it is almost the heaviest wood in the world, but because it gives more light than any other fuel. In clearing land, the pines are girdled and suffered to stand; the outer portion of the wood decays and falls off; the inner part, which is saturated with turpentine, remains upright for years, and constitutes the planter's provision of fuel. When a supply is wanted, one of these dead trunks is felled by the axe. The abundance of light-wood is one of the boasts of South Carolina. Wherever you are, if you happen to be chilly, you may have a fire extempore; a bit of light-wood and a coal give you a bright blaze and a strong heat in an instant. The negroes make fires of it in the fields where they work; and, when the mornings are wet and chilly, in the pens where they are milking the 85 cows. At a plantation, where I passed a frosty night, I saw fires in a small inclosure,

Library of Congress

and was told by the lady of the house that she had ordered them to be made to warm the cattle.

The light-wood fire was made, and the negroes dropped in from the neighboring plantations, singing as they came. The driver of the plantation, a colored man, brought out baskets of corn in the husk, and piled it in a heap; and the negroes began to strip the husks from the ears, singing with great glee as they worked, keeping time to the music, and now and then throwing in a joke and an extravagant burst of laughter. The songs were generally of a comic character; but one of them was set to a singularly wild and plaintive air, which some of our musicians would do well to reduce to notation. These are the words:

Johnny come down de hollow. Oh hollow!

Johnny come down de hollow. Oh hollow!

De nigger-trader got me. Oh hollow!

De speculator bought me. Oh hollow!

I'm sold for silver dollars. Oh hollow!

Boys, go catch de pony. Oh hollow!

Bring him round de corner. Oh hollow! 8

86

I'm goin' away to Georgia. Oh hollow!

Boys, good-by forever! Oh hollow!

The song of "Jenny gone away," was also given, and another, called the monkey-song, probably of African origin, in which the principal singer personated a monkey, with all sorts of odd gesticulations, and the other negroes bore part in the chorus, "Dan, dan, who's de

Library of Congress

dandy?" One of the songs, commonly sung on these occasions, represents the various animals of the woods as belonging to some profession or trade. For example— De cooter is de boatman— The cooter is the terrapin, and a very expert boatman he is.

De cooter is de boatman. John John Crow.

De red-bird de soger. John John Crow.

De mocking-bird de lawyer. John John Crow.

De alligator sawyer. John John Crow.

The alligator's back is furnished with a toothed ridge, like the edge of a saw, which explains the last line.

When the work of the evening was over the negroes adjourned to a spacious kitchen. One of them took his 87 place as musician, whistling, and beating time with two sticks upon the floor. Several of the men came forward and executed various dances, capering, prancing, and drumming with heel and toe upon the floor, with astonishing agility and perseverance, though all of them had performed their daily tasks and had worked all the evening, and some had walked from four to seven miles to attend the corn-shucking. From the dances a transition was made to a mock military parade, a sort of burlesque of our militia trainings, in which the words of command and the evolutions were extremely ludicrous. It became necessary for the commander to make a speech, and confessing his incapacity for public speaking, he called upon a huge black man named Toby to address the company in his stead. Toby, a man of powerful frame, six feet high, his face ornamented with a beard of fashionable cut, had hitherto stood leaning against the wall, looking upon the frolic with an air of superiority. He consented, came forward, demanded a bit of paper to hold in his hand, and harangued the soldiery. It was evident that Toby had listened to stump-speeches in his day. He spoke of "de majority of Sous Carolina," "de interests of de state," "de honor of ole Ba'nwell district," and these phrases he connected by various

Library of Congress

expletives, and sounds of which we could make nothing. A length he began to falter, when the captain with admirable presence of mind came to his relief, and interrupted and closed the harangue with an hurrah from the company. Toby was allowed by all the 88 spectators, black and white, to have made an excellent speech.

The blacks of this region are a cheerful, careless, dirty race, not hard worked, and in many respects indulgently treated. It is, of course, the desire of the master that his slaves shall be laborious; on the other hand it is the determination of the slave to lead as easy a life as he can. The master has power of punishment on his side; the slave, on his, has invincible inclination, and a thousand expedients learned by long practice. The result is a compromise in which each party yields something, and a good-natured though imperfect and slovenly obedience on one side, is purchased by good treatment on the other. I have been told by planters that the slave brought from Africa is much more serviceable, though more high-spirited and dangerous than the slave born in this country, and early trained to his condition.

I have been impatiently waiting the approach of spring, since I came to this state, but the weather here is still what the inhabitants call winter. The season, I am told, is more than three weeks later than usual. Fields of Indian corn which were planted in the beginning of March, must be replanted, for the seed has perished in the ground, and the cotton planting is deferred for fine weather. The peach and plum trees have stood in blossom for weeks, and the forest trees, which at this time are usually in full foliage, are as bare as in December. Cattle are dying in the fields for want of pasture.

89

I have thus had a sample of the winter climate of South Carolina. If never more severe or stormy than I have already experienced, it must be an agreeable one. The custom of sitting with open doors, however, I found a little difficult to like at first. A door in South Carolina, except perhaps the outer door of a house, is not made to shut. It is merely a sort of flapper, an ornamental appendage to the opening by which you enter a room, a kind of

moveable screen made to swing to and fro, but never to be secured by a latch, unless for some purpose of strict privacy. A door is the ventilator to the room; the windows are not raised except in warm weather, but the door is kept open at all seasons. On cold days you have a bright fire of pine-wood blazing before you, and a draught of cold air at your back. The reason given for this practice is, that fresh air is wholesome, and that close rooms occasion colds and consumptions. 8*

90

LETTER XII. SAVANNAH.

Picolata, East Florida, *April 7*, 1843.

As I landed at this place, a few hours since, I stepped into the midst of summer. Yesterday morning when I left Savannah, people were complaining that the winter was not over. The temperature which, at this time of the year, is usually warm and genial, continued to be what they called chilly, though I found it agreeable enough, and the showy trees, called the *Pride of India*, which are planted all over the city, and are generally in bloom at this season, were still leafless. Here I find every thing green, fresh, and fragrant, trees and shrubs in full foliage, and wild roses in flower. The dark waters of the St. John's, one of the noblest streams of the country, in depth and width like the St. Lawrence, draining almost the whole extent of the peninsula, are flowing under my window. On the opposite shore are forests of tall trees, bright in the new verdure of the season. A hunter who has ranged them the whole day, has just arrived in a canoe, bringing with him a deer, which he has killed. I have this moment returned from a ramble with my host through a hammock, 91 he looking for his cows, and I, unsuccessfully, for a thicket of orange-trees. He is something of a florist, and gathered for me, as we went, some of the forest plants, which were in bloom. "We have flowers here," said he, "every month in the year."

I have used the word hammock, which here, in Florida, has a peculiar meaning. A hammock is a spot covered with a growth of trees which require a richer soil than the

Library of Congress

pine, such as the oak, the mulberry, the gum-tree, the hickory, &c. The greater part of East Florida consists of pine barrens—a sandy level, producing the long leaved pine and the dwarf palmetto, a low plant, with fan-like leaves, and roots of a prodigious size. The hammock is a kind of oasis, a verdant and luxuriant island in the midst of these sterile sands, which make about nine-tenths of the soil of East Florida. In the hammocks grow the wild lime, the native orange, both sour and bitter-sweet, and the various vines and gigantic creepers of the country. The hammocks are chosen for plantations; here the cane is cultivated, and groves of the sweet orange planted. But I shall say more of Florida hereafter, when I have seen more of it. Meantime let me speak of my journey hither.

I left Charleston on the 30th of March, in one of the steamers which ply between that city and Savannah. These steamers are among the very best that float—quiet, commodious, clean, fresh as if just built, and furnished with civil and ready-handed waiters. We passed along the 92 narrow and winding channels which divide the broad islands of South Carolina from the main-land—islands famed for the rice culture, and particularly for the excellent cotton with long fibres, named the sea-island cotton. Our fellow-passengers were mostly planters of these islands, and their families, persons of remarkably courteous, frank, and agreeable manners. The shores on either side had little of the picturesque to show us. Extensive marshes waving with coarse water-grass, sometimes a cane-brake, sometimes a pine grove or a clump of cabbage-leaved palmettoes; here and there a pleasant bank bordered with live-oaks streaming with moss, and at wide intervals the distant habitation of a planter—these were the elements of the scenery. The next morning early we were passing up the Savannah river, and the city was in sight, standing among its trees on a high bank of the stream.

Savannah is beautifully laid out; its broad streets are thickly planted with the Pride of India, and its frequent open squares shaded with trees of various kinds. Oglethorpe seems to have understood how a city should be built in a warm climate, and the people of the place are fond of reminding the stranger that the original plan of the founder has never been departed from. The town, so charmingly embowered, reminded me of New Haven, though

Library of Congress

the variety of trees is greater. In my walks about the place I passed a large stuccoed building of a dull-yellow color, with broad arched windows, and a stately portico, on each side 93 of which stood a stiff-looking palmetto, as if keeping guard. The grim aspect of the building led me to ask what it was, and I was answered that it was "the old United States Bank." It was the building in which the Savannah branch of that bank transacted business, and is now shut up until the time shall come when that great institution shall be revived. Meantime I was pained to see that there exists so little reverence for its memory, and so little gratitude for its benefits, that the boys have taken to smashing the windows, so that those who have the care of the building have been obliged to cover them with plank. In another part of the city I was shown an African church, a neat, spacious wooden building, railed in, and kept in excellent order, with a piazza extending along its entire front. It is one of the four places of worship for the blacks of the town, and was built by negro workmen with materials purchased by the contributions of the whites.

South of the town extends an uninclosed space, on one side of which is a pleasant grove of pines, in the shade of which the members of a quoit-club practice their athletic sport. Here on a Saturday afternoon, for that is their stated time of assembling, I was introduced to some of the most distinguished citizens of Savannah, and witnessed the skill with which they threw the discus. No apprentices were they in the art; there was no striking far from the stake, no sending the discus rolling over the green; they 94 heaped the quoits as snugly around the stakes as if the amusement had been their profession.

In the same neighborhood, just without the town, lies the public cemetery surrounded by an ancient wall, built before the revolution, which in some places shows the marks of shot fired against it in the skirmishes of that period. I entered it, hoping to find some monuments of those who founded the city a hundred and ten years ago, but the inscriptions are of comparatively recent date. Most of them commemorate the death of persons born in Europe, or the northern states. I was told that the remains of the early inhabitants lie in the brick tombs, of which there are many without any inscription whatever.

Library of Congress

At a little distance, near a forest, lies the burial-place of the black population. A few trees, trailing with long moss, rise above hundreds of nameless graves, overgrown with weeds; but here and there are scattered memorials of the dead, some of a very humble kind, with a few of marble, and half a dozen spacious brick tombs like those in the cemetery of the whites. Some of them are erected by masters and mistresses to the memory of favorite slaves. One of them commemorates the death of a young woman who perished in the catastrophe of the steamer Pulaski, of whom it is recorded, that during the whole time that she was in the service of her mistress, which was many years, she never committed a theft, nor uttered a falsehood. A 95 brick monument, in the shape of a little tomb, with a marble slab inserted in front, has this inscription:

“In memory of Henrietta Gatlin, the infant stranger, born in East Florida, aged 1 year 3 months.”

A graveyard is hardly the place to be merry in, but I could not help smiling at some of the inscriptions. A fair upright marble slab commemorates the death of York Fleming, a cooper, who was killed by the explosion of a powder-magazine, while tightening the hoops of a keg of powder. It closes with this curious sentence:

“This stone was erected by the members of the Axe Company, Coopers and Committee of the 2nd African Church of Savannah for the purpose of having a Herse for benevolent purposes, of which he was the first sexton.”

A poor fellow, who went to the other world by water, has a wooden slab to mark his grave, inscribed with these words:

“Sacred to the memory of Robert Spencer who came to his Death by A Boat, July 9th, 1840, aged 21 years. Reader as you am now so once I And as I am now so Mus you be Shortly. Amen.”

Library of Congress

Another monument, after giving the name of the dead, has this sentence:

“Go home Mother dry up your weeping tears. Gods will be done.”

96

Another, erected to Sarah Morel, aged six months, has this ejaculation:

“Sweet withered lilly farewell.”

One of the monuments is erected to Andrew Bryan, a black preacher, of the Baptist persuasion. A long inscription states that he was once imprisoned “for preaching the Gospel, and, without ceremony, severely whipped;” and that, while undergoing the punishment, “he told his persecutors that he not only rejoiced to be whipped, but was willing to suffer death for the cause of Christ.” He died in 1812, at the age of ninety-six; his funeral, the inscription takes care to state, was attended by a large concourse of people, and adds:

“An address was delivered at his death by the Rev. Mr. Johnson, Dr. Kollock, Thomas Williams, and Henry Cunningham.”

While in Savannah, I paid a visit to Bonaventure, formerly a country seat of Governor Tatnall, but now abandoned. A pleasant drive of a mile or two, through a budding forest, took us to the place, which is now itself almost grown up into forest. Cedars and other shrubs hide the old terraces of the garden, which is finely situated on the high bank of a river. Trees of various kinds have also nearly filled the space between the noble avenues of live-oaks which were planted around the mansion. But these oaks—I never saw finer trees—certainly I never saw so many 97 majestic and venerable trees together. I looked far down the immense arches that overshadowed the broad passages, as high as the nave of a Gothic cathedral, apparently as old, and stretching to a greater distance. The huge boughs were clothed with gray moss, yards in length, which clung to them like mist, or hung in still festoons on every side, and gave them the appearance of the vault of a

Library of Congress

vast vapory cavern. The cawing of the crow and the scream of the jay, however, reminded us that we were in the forest. Of the mansion there are no remains; but in the thicket of magnolias and other trees, among rosebushes and creeping plants, we found a burial-place with monuments of some persons to whom the seat had belonged.

Savannah is more healthy of late years than it formerly was. An arrangement has been made with the owners of the plantations in the immediate vicinity, by which the culture of rice has been abandoned, and the lands are no longer allowed to be overflowed within a mile from the city. The place has since become much less subject to fevers than in former years.

I left, with a feeling of regret, the agreeable society of Savannah. The steamboat took us to St. Mary's, through passages between the sea-islands and the main-land, similar to those by which we had arrived at Savannah. In the course of the day, we passed a channel in which we saw several huge alligators basking on the bank. The grim creatures slid slowly into the water at our approach. We passed 9 98 St. Mary's in the night, and in the morning we were in the main ocean, approaching the St. John's, where we saw a row of pelicans standing, like creatures who had nothing to do, on the sand. We entered the majestic river, the vast current of which is dark with the infusion of the swamp turf, from which it is drained. We passed Jacksonville, a little town of great activity, which has sprung up on the sandy bank within two or three years. Beyond, we swept by the mouth of the Black Creek, the water of which, probably from the color of the mud which forms the bed of its channel, has to the eye an ebony blackness, and reflects objects with all the distinctness of the kind of looking-glass called a black mirror. A few hours brought us to Picolata, lately a military station, but now a place with only two houses.

99

LETTER XIII. ST. AUGUSTINE.

St. Augustine, East Florida, *April 2*, 1843.

Library of Congress

When we left Picolata, on the 8th of April, we found ourselves journeying through a vast forest. A road of eighteen miles in length, over the level sands, brings you to this place. Tall pines, a thin growth, stood wherever we turned our eyes, and the ground was covered with the dwarf palmetto, and the whortleberry, which is here an evergreen. Yet there were not wanting sights to interest us, even in this dreary and sterile region. As we passed a clearing, in which we saw a young white woman and a boy dropping corn, and some negroes covering it with their hoes, we beheld a large flock of white cranes which rose in the air, and hovered over the forest, and wheeled, and wheeled again, their spotless plumage glistening in the sun like new-fallen snow. We crossed the track of a recent hurricane, which had broken off the huge pines midway from the ground, and whirled the summits to a distance from their trunks. From time to time we forded little streams of a deep-red color, flowing from the swamps, tinged, as we were told, with the roots of the red bay, a species of magnolia. 100 As the horses waded into the transparent crimson, we thought of the butcheries committed by the Indians, on that road, and could almost fancy that the water was still colored with the blood they had shed.

The driver of our wagon told us many narratives of these murders, and pointed out the places where they were committed. He showed us where the father of this young woman was shot dead in his wagon as he was going from St. Augustine to his plantation, and the boy whom we had seen, was wounded and scalped by them, and left for dead. In another place he showed us the spot where a party of players, on their way to St. Augustine, were surprised and killed. The Indians took possession of the stage dresses, one of them arraying himself in the garb of Othello, another in that of Richard the Third, and another taking the costume of Falstaff. I think it was Wild Cat's gang who engaged in this affair, and I was told that after the capture of this chief and some of his warriors, they recounted the circumstances with great glee. At another place we passed a small thicket in which several armed Indians, as they afterward related, lay concealed while an officer of the United States army rode several times around it, without any suspicion of their presence.

Library of Congress

The same men committed, immediately afterward, several murders and robberies on the road.

At length we emerged upon a shrubby plain, and finally came in sight of this oldest city of the United States, seated 101 among its trees on a sandy swell of land where it has stood for three hundred years. I was struck with its ancient and homely aspect, even at a distance, and could not help likening it to pictures which I had seen of Dutch towns, though it wanted a windmill or two, to make the resemblance perfect. We drove into a green square, in the midst of which was a monument erected to commemorate the Spanish constitution of 1812, and thence through the narrow streets of the city to our hotel.

I have called the streets narrow. In few places are they wide enough to allow two carriages to pass abreast. I was told that they were not originally intended for carriages, and that in the time when the town belonged to Spain, many of them were floored with an artificial stone, composed of shells and mortar, which in this climate takes and keeps the hardness of rock, and that no other vehicle than a hand-barrow was allowed to pass over them. In some places you see remnants of this ancient pavement, but for the most part it has been ground into dust under the wheels of the carts and carriages, introduced by the new inhabitants. The old houses, built of a kind of stone which is seemingly a pure concretion of small shells, overhang the streets with their wooden balconies, and the gardens between the houses are fenced on the side of the street with high walls of stone. Peeping over these walls you see branches of the pomegranate and of the orange-tree, now fragrant with flowers, and, rising yet higher, the leaning 9* 102 boughs of the fig, with its broad luxuriant leaves. Occasionally you pass the ruins of houses—walls of stone, with arches and staircases of the same material, which once belonged to stately dwellings. You meet in the streets with men of swarthy complexions and foreign physiognomy, and you hear them speaking to each other in a strange language. You are told that these are the remains of those who inhabited the country under the Spanish dominion, and that the dialect you have heard is that of the island of Minorca.

"Twelve years ago," said an acquaintance of mine, "when I first visited St. Augustine, it was a fine old Spanish town. A large proportion of the houses, which you now see roofed like barns, were then flat-roofed, they were all of shell-rock, and these modern wooden buildings were not yet erected. That old fort, which they are now repairing, to fit it for receiving a garrison, was a sort of ruin, for the outworks had partly fallen, and it stood unoccupied by the military, a venerable monument of the Spanish dominion. But the orange-groves were the ornament and wealth of St. Augustine, and their produce maintained the inhabitants in comfort. Orange-trees, of the size and height of the pear-tree, often rising higher than the roofs of the houses, embowered the town in perpetual verdure. They stood so close in the groves that they excluded the sun and the atmosphere was at all times aromatic with their leaves and fruit, and in spring the fragrance of the flowers was almost oppressive."

103

These groves have now lost their beauty. A few years since, a severe frost killed the trees to the ground, and when they sprouted again from the roots, a new enemy made its appearance—an insect of the *coccus* family, with a kind of shell on its back, which enables it to withstand all the common applications for destroying insects, and the ravages of which are shown by the leaves becoming black and sere, and the twigs perishing. In October last, a gale drove in the spray from the ocean, stripping the trees, except in sheltered situations, of their leaves, and destroying the upper branches. The trunks are now putting out new sprouts and new leaves, but there is no hope of fruit for this year at least.

The old fort of St. Mark, now called Fort Marion, a foolish change of name, is a noble work, frowning over the Matanzas, which flows between St. Augustine and the island of St. Anastasia, and it is worth making a long journey to see. No record remains of its original construction, but it is supposed to have been erected about a hundred and fifty years since, and the shell-rock of which it is built is dark with time. We saw where it had been struck with cannon-balls, which, instead of splitting the rock, became imbedded

Library of Congress

and clogged among the loosened fragments of shell. This rock is, therefore, one of the best materials for a fortification in the world. We were taken into the ancient prisons of the fort—dungeons, one of which was dimly lighted by a grated window, and another entirely without light; and by the 104 flame of a torch we were shown the half-obliterated inscriptions scrawled on the walls long ago by prisoners. But in another corner of the fort, we were taken to look at two secret cells, which were discovered a few years since, in consequence of the sinking of the earth over a narrow apartment between them. These cells are deep under ground, vaulted overhead, and without windows. In one of them a wooden machine was found, which some supposed might have been a rack, and in the other a quantity of human bones. The doors of these cells had been walled up and concealed with stucco, before the fort passed into the hands of the Americans.

“If the Inquisition,” said the gentleman who accompanied us, “was established in Florida, as it was in the other American colonies of Spain, these were its secret chambers.”

Yesterday was Palm Sunday, and in the morning I attended the services in the Catholic church. One of the ceremonies was that of pronouncing the benediction over a large pile of leaves of the cabbage-palm, or palmetto, gathered in the woods. After the blessing had been pronounced, the priest called upon the congregation to come and receive them. The men came forward first, in the order of their age, and then the women; and as the congregation consisted mostly of the descendants of Minorcans, Greeks, and Spaniards, I had a good opportunity of observing their personal appearance. The younger portion of the 105 congregation had, in general, expressive countenances. Their forms, it appeared to me, were generally slighter than those of our people; and if the cheeks of the young women were dark, they had regular features and brilliant eyes, and finely formed hands. There is spirit, also, in this class, for one of them has since been pointed out to me in the streets, as having drawn a dirk upon a young officer who presumed upon some improper freedoms of behavior.

The services were closed by a plain and sensible discourse in English, from the priest, Mr. Rampon, a worthy and useful French ecclesiastic, on the obligation of temperance; for the temperance reform has penetrated even hither, and cold water is all the rage. I went again, the other evening, into the same church, and heard a person declaiming, in a language which, at first, I took to be Minorcan, for I could make nothing else of it. After listening for a few minutes, I found that it was a Frenchman preaching in Spanish, with a French mode of pronunciation which was odd enough. I asked one of the old, Spanish inhabitants how he was edified by this discourse, and he acknowledged that he understood about an eighth part of it.

I have much more to write about this place, but must reserve it for another letter.

106

LETTER XIV. ST. AUGUSTINE.

St. Augustine, *April* 24, 1843.

You can not be in St. Augustine a day without hearing some of its inhabitants speak of its agreeable climate. During the sixteen days of my residence here, the weather has certainly been as delightful as I could imagine. We have the temperature of early June, as June is known in New York. The mornings are sometimes a little sultry, but after two or three hours, a fresh breeze comes in from the sea, sweeping through the broad piazzas and breathing in at the windows. At this season it comes laden with the fragrance of the flowers of the Pride of India, and sometimes of the orange-tree, and sometimes brings the scent of roses, now in full bloom. The nights are gratefully cool, and I have been told, by a person who has lived here many years, that there are very few nights in the summer when you can sleep without a blanket.

An acquaintance of mine, an invalid, who has tried various climates and has kept up a kind of running fight with Death for many years, retreating from country to country as he

Library of Congress

pursued, declares to me that the winter climate of St. Augustine 107 is to be preferred to that of any part of Europe, even that of Sicily, and that it is better than the climate of the West Indies. He finds it genial and equable, at the same time that it is not enfeebling. The summer heats are prevented from being intense by the sea-breeze, of which I have spoken. I have looked over the work of Dr. Ferry on the climate of the United States, and have been surprised to see the uniformity of climate which he ascribes to Key West. As appears by the observations he has collected, the seasons at that place glide into each other by the softest gradations, and the heat never, even in midsummer, reaches that extreme which is felt in higher latitudes of the American continent. The climate of Florida is in fact an insular climate; the Atlantic on the east and the Gulf of Mexico on the west, temper the airs that blow over it, making them cooler in summer and warmer in winter. I do not wonder, therefore, that it is so much the resort of invalids; it would be more so if the softness of its atmosphere and the beauty and serenity of its seasons were generally known. Nor should it be supposed that accommodations for persons in delicate health are wanting; they are in fact becoming better with every year, as the demand for them increases. Among the acquaintances whom I have made here, I number many who, having come hither for the benefit of their health, are detained for life by the amenity of the climate. "It seems to me," said an intelligent gentleman of this class, the other day, "as if I could not exist out of 108 Florida. When I go to the north, I feel most sensibly, the severe extremes of the weather; the climate of Charleston itself, appears harsh to me."

Here at St. Augustine we have occasional frosts in the winter, but at Tampa Bay, on the western shore of the peninsula, no further from this place than from New York to Albany, the dew is never congealed on the grass, nor is a snow-flake ever seen floating in the air. Those who have passed the winter in that place, speak with a kind of rapture of the benignity of the climate. In that country grow the cocoa and the banana, and other productions of the West Indies. Persons who have explored Florida to the south of this, during the past winter, speak of having refreshed themselves with melons in January,

Library of Congress

growing where they had been self-sown, and of having seen the sugar-cane where it had been planted by the Indians, towering uncropped, almost to the height of the forest trees.

I must tell you, however, what was said to me by a person who had passed a considerable time in Florida, and had journeyed, as he told me, in the southern as well as the northern part of the peninsula, "That the climate is mild and agreeable," said he, "I admit, but the annoyance to which you are exposed from insects, counterbalances all the enjoyment of the climate. You are bitten by mosquitoes and gallinippers, driven mad by clouds of sand-flies, and stung by scorpions and centipedes. It is not safe to go to bed in southern Florida without looking between the sheets, to see if there be not a scorpion waiting to be your bed-fellow, nor to put on a garment that has been hanging up in your room, without turning it wrong side out, to see if a scorpion has not found a lodging in it." I have not, however, been incommoded at St. Augustine with these "varmint," as they call them at the south. Only the sand-flies, a small black midge, I have sometimes found a little importunate, when walking out in a very calm evening.

Of the salubrity of East Florida I must speak less positively, although it is certain that in St. Augustine emigrants from the north enjoy good health. The owners of the plantations in the neighborhood, prefer to pass the hot season in this city, not caring to trust their constitutions to the experiment of a summer residence in the country. Of course they are settled on the richest soils, and these are the least healthy. The pine barrens are safer; when not interspersed with marshes, the sandy lands that bear the pine are esteemed healthy all over the south. Yet there are plantations on the St. John's where emigrants from the north reside throughout the year. The opinion seems everywhere to prevail, and I believe there is good reason for it, that Florida, notwithstanding its low and level surface, is much more healthy than the low country of South Carolina and Georgia.

The other day I went out with a friend to a sugar plantation in the neighborhood of St. Augustine. As we rode into the inclosure we breathed the fragrance of young orange-trees in flower, the glossy leaves of which, green at all seasons, were trembling in the

Library of Congress

wind, A troop of negro children were at play at a little distance from the cabins, and one of them ran along with us to show us a grove of sour oranges which we were looking for. He pointed us to a copse in the middle of a field, to which we proceeded. The trees, which were of considerable size, were full of flowers, and the golden fruit was thick on the branches, and lay scattered on the ground below. I gathered a few of the oranges, and found them almost as acid as the lemon. We stopped to look at the buildings in which the sugar was manufactured. In one of them was the mill where the cane was crushed with iron rollers, in another stood the huge cauldrons, one after another, in which the juice was boiled down to the proper consistence; in another were barrels of sugar, of syrup—a favorite article of consumption in this city—of molasses, and a kind of spirits resembling Jamaica rum, distilled from the refuse of the molasses. The proprietor was absent, but three negroes, well-clad young men, of a very respectable appearance and intelligent physiognomy, one of whom was a distiller, were occupied about the buildings, and showed them to us. Near by in the open air lay a pile of sugar cane, of the ribbon variety, striped with red and white, which had been plucked up by the roots, and reserved for planting. The negroes of St. Augustine are a good-looking specimen of the race, and have the appearance of being very well treated. You rarely see 111 a negro in ragged clothing, and the colored children, though slaves, are often dressed with great neatness. In the colored people whom I saw in the Catholic church, I remarked a more agreeable, open, and gentle physiognomy than I have been accustomed to see in that class. The Spanish race blends more kindly with the African, than does the English, and produces handsomer men and women.

I have been to see the quarries of coquina, or shell-rock, on the island of St. Anastasia, which lies between St. Augustine and the main ocean. We landed on the island, and after a walk of some distance on a sandy road through the thick shrubs, we arrived at some huts built of a framework of poles thatched, with the radiated leaves of the dwarf palmetto, which had a very picturesque appearance. Here we found a circular hollow in the earth, the place of an old excavation, now shaded with red-cedars, and the palmetto-

Library of Congress

royal bristling with long pointed leaves, which bent over and embowered it, and at the bottom was a spring within a square curb of stone, where we refreshed ourselves with a draught of cold water. The quarries were at a little distance from this. The rock lies in the ridges, a little below the surface, forming a stratum of no great depth. The blocks are cut out with crowbars thrust into the rock. It is of a delicate cream color, and is composed of mere shells and fragments of shells, apparently cemented by the fresh water percolating through them and depositing calcareous matter brought from the shells above. Whenever 112 there is any mixture of sand with the shells, rock is not formed.

Of this material the old fort of St. Mark and the greater part of the city are built. It is said to become harder when exposed to the air and the rain, but to disintegrate when frequently moistened with sea-water. Large blocks were lying on the shore ready to be conveyed to the fort, which is undergoing repairs. It is some consolation to know that this fine old work will undergo as little change in the original plan as is consistent with the modern improvements in fortification. Lieutenant Benham, who has the charge of the repairs, has strong antiquarian tastes, and will preserve as much as possible of its original aspect. It must lose its battlements, however, its fine mural crown. Battlements are now obsolete, except when they are of no use, as on the roofs of churches and Gothic cottages.

In another part of the same island, which we visited afterward, is a dwelling-house situated amid orange-groves. Closely planted rows of the sour orange, the native tree of the country, intersect and shelter orchards of the sweet orange, the lemon, and the lime. The trees were all young, having been planted since the great frost of 1835, and many of them still show the ravages of the gale of last October, which stripped them of their leaves.

"Come this way," said a friend who accompanied me. He forced a passage through a tall hedge of the sour orange, and we found ourselves in a little fragrant inclosure, in the 113 midst of which was a tomb, formed of the artificial stone of which I have heretofore spoken. It was the resting-place of the former proprietor, who sleeps in this little circle of perpetual verdure. It bore no inscription. Not far from this spot, I was shown the root of an ancient

Library of Congress

palm-tree, the species that produces the date, which formerly towered over the island, and served as a sea-mark to vessels approaching the shore. Some of the accounts of St. Augustine speak of dates as among its fruits; but I believe that only the male tree of the date-palm has been introduced into the country.

On our return to the city, in crossing the Matanzas sound, so named probably from some sanguinary battle with the aborigines on its shores; we passed two Minorcans in a boat, taking home fuel from the island. These people are a mild, harmless race, of civil manners and abstemious habits. Mingled with them are many Greek families, with names that denote their origin, such as Geopoli, Cercopoli, &c., and with a cast of features equally expressive of their descent. The Minorcan language, the dialect of Mahon, *el Mahones*, as they call it, is spoken by more than half of the inhabitants who remained here when the country was ceded to the United States, and all of them, I believe, speak Spanish besides. Their children, however, are growing up in disuse of these languages, and in another generation the last traces of the majestic speech of Castile, will have been effaced from a country which the Spaniards held for more than two hundred years. 10*

114

Some old customs which the Minorcans brought with them from their native country are still kept up. On the evening before Easter Sunday, about eleven o'clock, I heard the sound of a serenade in the streets. Going out, I found a party of young men, with instruments of music, grouped about the window of one of the dwellings, singing a hymn in honor of the Virgin in the Mahonese dialect. They began, as I was told, with tapping on the shutter. An answering knock within had told them that their visit was welcome, and they immediately began the serenade. If no reply had been heard they would have passed on to another dwelling. I give the hymn as it was kindly taken down for me in writing by a native of St. Augustine. I presume this is the first time that it has been put in print, but I fear the copy has several corruptions, occasioned by the unskillfulness of the copyist. The letter *e*, which I have put in italics, represents the guttural French *e*, or perhaps

Library of Congress

more nearly the sound of *u* in the word but. The *sh* of our language is represented by *sc* followed by an *i* or an *e*; the *g* both hard and soft has the same sound as in our language.

Disciar e m lu dol, Cantar e m anb' alagria, Y n'arem a dá Las pascuas a Maria. O Maria!

Sant Grabiél, Qui portaba la anbasciada;

115

Des nostro rey del cel Estarau vos preñada. Ya omiliada, Tu o vais aqui serventa, Fia del Deu contenta, Para fe lo que el vol. Disciar e m lu dol, &c.

Y a milla nit, Pariguero vos regina; A un Deu infinit, Dintra una establina. Y a millo dia, Que los Angles van cantant Pau y abundant De la gloria de Deu sol. Disciar e m lu dol, &c.

Y a Libalam, Allá la terra santa, Nus nat Jesus, Anb' alagria tanta. Infant petit Que tot lu mon salvaria; Y ningu y bastaria, Nu mes ual Deu tot sol. Disciar e m lu dol, &c.

Cuant d'Orien lus Tres reys la stralla veran, Deu omnipotent, Adorà lo vingaran. Un present inferan, De mil e ncens y or, A lu beneit Seño, Que conesce cual se vol. Disciar e m lu dol, &c.

116

Tot fu gayant Para cumplí lu prumas; Y lu Esperit sant De un angel fau gramas. Gran foc ences, Que crama lu curagia; Deu nos da lenguaia, Para fe lo que Deu vol. Disciar e m lu dol, &c.

Cuant trespasá De qu e st mon nostra Señora, Al cel s' e mpugió Sun fil la matescia ora. O emperadora, Que del cel sou eligida! Lu rosa florida, Mé resplanden que un sol. Disciar e m lu del, &c.

Y el tercer giorn Que Jesus resuntá, Deu y Aboroma, Que la mort triumfá. De alli se ballá Para perldrá Lucife, An tot a seu peudá, Que de nostro ser el sol. Disciar e m lu dol, &c.*

Library of Congress

* The following is a Spanish translation of this hymn as taken down in writing from the mouth of one of the Mahonese, as they call themselves, a native of St. Augustine. The author does not hold himself responsible for the purity of the Castilian.

Dejaremos el duelo, Cantaremos con alegria, E iremos á dar Las pascuas á Maria. O Maria.

San Gabriel Acá portó la embajada. De nuestro rey del ciel Estareis preñada. Ya humillada Tu que vais aqui servente, Hija de Dios contenta Para hacer lo que el quiere. Dejaremos el duelo, &a.

Y á media noche, Paristeis reyna A un Dies infinito Dentro de un establo. Y a medio dia, Los Angeles van cantando Paz y abundancia De la gloria de Dios solo. Dejaremos, el duelo, &a.

Y a Belem, Allá en la tierra santa, Nos nació Gesus Con alegria tanta. Niño chiquito, Que todo el mundo salvaria; Y ningun bastaria Sino un Dios todo solo. Dejaremos el duelo, &a.

Cuando del Oriente los Tres reyes la estrella vieron, Dios omnipotente, Para adorarlo vinieron, Un regalo inferieron, De mil inciensos y oro, Al bendito Señor Que sabe qualquiera cosa. Dejaremos el duelo, &a.

Todo fu pronto Para cumplir la prornesa; Del Espiritu Santo Un Angel fue mandado. Gran fuego encendido Que quema el corage; Dios nos de language Para hacer lo que quiere. Dejaremos el duelo, &a.

Cuando se fué De este mundo nuestra Señora, Al ciel se empujó Su hijo la misma hora. O emperadora, Que del ciel sois elijida! La rosa florida, Mas resplend iente que un sol! Dejaremos el duelo, &a.

Library of Congress

Y el tercer dia Que Gesus resuscito, Dios y Veronica De la morte triunfó. De alii se bajó
Para perder á Lucifer, Con todo su poder, Que de nuestro ser el sol. Dejaremos el,duelo,
&a.

117

After this hymn, the following stanzas, soliciting the customary gift of cakes or eggs, are sung:

C e set sois que vam cantant, Regina celastial! Dunus pau y alagria, Y bonas festas tingau. Yo vos dou sus bonas festas, Danaus dinés de sus nous; Sempre tar e m lus mans llestas Para recibí un grapat de ous.

118

Y el giorn de pascua florida Alagramos y giuntament; As qui e s mort par darnos vida Ya viú gloriosament.

119

Aqu e sta casa está empedrada, Bien halla que la empedró; Sun amo de aqu e sta casa Baldria duná un do. Furmagiada, o empanada, Cucutta o flaó; Cual se vol cosa me grada, Sol que no me digas que no.*

* Thus in the Spanish translation furnished me:

Estos seis versos que cantamos Reyina celestial! Dadnos paz y alegria, Y buenas fiestas tengais. Yo vos doy sus buenas fiestas; Dadnos dinero de nuestras nueces. Siempre tendremos las manos prestas. Para recibir un cuatro de huevos.

Y el dia de pascua florida, Alegremonos jantamente; El que mori para darnos vida Ya vive gloriosamente.

Library of Congress

Aquesta casa está empedrada, Bien halla que la empedró; El amo de aquesta casa,
Quisiera darnos un don. Quesadilla, o empanada, Cucuta, o fiaon, Qualquiera cosa me
agrada, Solo que no me digas que no.

120

The shutters are then opened by the people within, and a supply of cheese-cakes, or other
pastry, or eggs, is dropped into a bag carried by one of the party, who acknowledge the
gift in the following lines, and then depart:

Aqu e sta casa está empedrada, Empedrada de cuatro vens; Sun amo de aqu e sta casa,
*E s omo de compliment.**

If nothing is given, the last line reads thus:

No e s omo de compliment.

* Thus in the Spanish:

Aquesta casa está empedrada, Empedrada de cuatro vientos; El amo de aquesta casa Es
hombre de cortesia.

121

LETTER XV. A VOYAGE FROM ST. AUGUSTINE TO SAVANNAH.

Savannah, *April* 28, 1843.

On the morning of the 24th, we took leave of our good friends in St. Augustine, and
embarked in the steamer for Savannah. Never were softer or more genial airs breathed
out of the heavens than those which played around us as we ploughed the waters of the
Matanzas Sound, passing under the dark walls of the old fort, and leaving it behind us,
stood for the passage to the main ocean.

Library of Congress

It is a common saying in St. Augustine, that "Florida is the best poor man's country in the world," and, truly, I believe that those who live on the shores of this sound find it so. Its green waters teem with life, and produce abundance of the finest fish, "— of shell or fin, And exquisitest name." Clams are dug up on the pure sands along the beach, where the fishermen drag their boats ashore, and wherever the salt water dashes, there is an oyster, if he can find aught upon which to anchor his habitation. Along the edge of the marshes, next to the water, you see a row—a wall I should rather say—of oysters, apparently sprouting one out of another, as high as the tide flows. They are called here, though I do not know why, ratoon oysters. The abundance of fish solves the problem which has puzzled many, how the Minorcan population of St. Augustine live, now that their orange-trees, upon which they formerly depended, are unproductive.

In the steamboat were two or three persons who had visited Florida with a view of purchasing land. Now that the Indian war is ended, colonization has revived, and people are thronging into the country to take advantage of the law which assigns a hundred and sixty acres to every actual settler. In another year, the influx of population will probably be still greater, though the confusion and uncertainty which exist in regard to the title of the lands, will somewhat obstruct the settlement of the country. Before the Spanish government ceded it to the United States, they made numerous grants to individuals, intended to cover all the best land of the territory. Many of the lands granted have never been surveyed, and their situation and limits are very uncertain. The settler, therefore, if he is not very careful, may find his farm overlaid by an old Spanish claim.

I have said that the war is ended. Although the Seminole chief, Sam Jones, and about seventy of his people remain, the country is in profound peace from one end to the other, and you may traverse the parts most distant from the white settlements without the least danger or molestation from the Indians. "How is it," I asked one day of a gentleman who had long resided in St. Augustine, "that, after what has happened, you can think it safe to let these people remain?"

"It is perfectly safe," he answered. "Sam Jones professes, and I believe truly, to have had less to do with the murders which have been committed than the other chiefs, though it is certain that Dr. Perrine, whose death we so much lament, was shot at Indian Key by his men. Besides, he has a quarrel with one of the Seminole chiefs, whose relative he has killed, and if he were to follow them to their new country, he would certainly be put to death. It is his interest, therefore, to propitiate the favor of the whites by the most unexceptionable behavior, for his life depends upon being allowed to remain.

"There is yet another reason, which you will understand from what I am about to say; Before the war broke out, the Indians of this country, those very men who suddenly became so bloodthirsty and so formidable, were a quiet and inoffensive race, badly treated for the most part by the whites, and passively submitting to ill treatment without any appearance of feeling or spirit. When they at length resolved upon war, they concealed their families in the islands of the Everglades, whither they supposed the whites would never be able to follow them. Their rule of warfare ¹²⁴ was this, never to endanger the life of one of their warriors for the sake of gaining the greatest advantage over their enemies; they struck only when they felt themselves in perfect safety. If they saw an opportunity of destroying twenty white men by the sacrifice of a single Indian, the whites were allowed to escape. Acting on this principle, if their retreat had been as inaccessible as they supposed it, they would have kept up the warfare until they had driven the whites out of the territory.

"When, however, General Worth introduced a new method of prosecuting the war, following up the Indians with a close and perpetual pursuit, chasing them into their great shallow lake, the Everglades, and to its most secret islands, they, saw at once that they were conquered. They saw that further hostilities were hopeless, and returned to their former submissive and quiet demeanor.

Library of Congress

"It is well, perhaps," added my friend in a kind of postscript, "that a few Indians should remain in Florida. They are the best hunters of runaway slaves in the world, and may save us from a Maroon war."

The Indian name of the Everglades, I am told, signifies Grass-water, a term which well expresses its appearance. It is a vast lake, broader by thousands of acres in a wet than in a dry season, and so shallow that the grass everywhere grows from the bottom and overtops its surface. The bottom is of hard sand, so firm that it can be forded almost everywhere on horseback, and here and there are 125 deep channels which the traveller crosses by swimming his horse.

General Worth's success in quelling the insurrection of the Seminoles, has made him very popular in Florida, where the energy and sagacity with which the closing campaign of the war was conducted are spoken of in the highest terms. He has lately fixed his headquarters at St Augustine.

In the afternoon, our steamer put in between two sandy points of land and we arrived at St Mary's, formerly a buccaneer settlement, but now so zealous for good order that our captain told us the inhabitants objected to his taking in Wood for his steamboat on Sunday. The place is full of groves of the orange and lime—young trees which have grown up since 1835, and which, not having suffered, like those of St. Augustine, by the gale, I found beautifully luxuriant. In this place, it was my fate to experience the plague of sand-flies. Clouds of them came into the steam-boat alighting on our faces and hands and stinging wherever they alighted. The little creatures got into our hair and into our eyes, and crawled up our sleeves and down our necks, giving us no rest, until late in the night the vessel left the wharf and stood out into the river, where the current of air swept most of our tormentors away.

The next morning, as we were threading the narrow channels by which the inland passage is made from St. Mary's to Savannah, we saw, from time to time, alligators basking on

Library of Congress

the banks. Some of our fellow-passengers took 11* 126 rifles and shot at them as we went by. The smaller ones were often killed, the larger generally took the rifle-balls upon their impenetrable backs, and walked, apparently unhurt, into the water. One of these monstrous creatures I saw receive his death-wound; having been fired at twice, the balls probably entering at the eyes. In his agony he dashed swiftly through the water for a little distance, and turning rushed with equal rapidity in the opposite direction, the strokes of his strong arms throwing half his length above the surface. The next moment he had turned over and lay lifeless, with his great claws upward. A sallow-complexioned man from Burke county, in Georgia, who spoke a kind of negro dialect, was one of the most active in this sport, and often said to the bystanders. "I hit the 'gator that time, I did." We passed where two of these huge reptiles were lying on the bank among the rank sedges, one of them with his head towards us. A rifle-ball from the steamer, struck the ground just before his face, and he immediately made for the water, dragging, with his awkward legs, a huge body of about fifteen feet in length. A shower of balls fell about him as he reached the river, but he paddled along with as little apparent concern as the steamboat we were in.

The tail of the alligator is said to be no bad eating, and the negroes are fond of it. I have heard, however, that the wife of a South Carolina cracker once declared her dislike of it in the following terms:

127

"Coon and collards is pretty good fixins, but 'gator and turnips I can't go, no how."

Collards, you will understand, are a kind of cabbage. In this country, you will often hear of long collards, a favorite dish of the planter.

Among the marksmen who were engaged in shooting alligators, were two or three expert chewers of the Indian weed—frank and careless spitters—who had never been disciplined by the fear of woman into any hypocritical concealment of their talent, or unmanly reserve in its exhibition. I perceived, from a remark which one of them let fall, that somehow they

connected this accomplishment with high breeding. He was speaking of four negroes who were hanged in Georgia on a charge of murdering their owner.

“One of them,” said he, “was innocent. They made no confession, but held up their heads, chewed their tobacco, and spit about like any gentlemen.”

You have here the last of my letters from the south. Savannah, which I left wearing almost a wintry aspect, is now in the full verdure of summer. The locust-trees are in blossom; the water-oaks, which were shedding their winter foliage, are now thick with young and glossy leaves; the Pride of India is ready to burst into flower, and the gardens are full of roses in bloom.

128

LETTER XVI. AN EXCURSION TO VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Addison County, Vermont, *July* 10, 1843.

I do not recollect that I ever heard the canal connecting the Hudson with Lake Champlain praised for its beauty, yet it is actually beautiful—that part of it at least which lies between Dunham's Basin and the lake, a distance of twenty-one miles, for of the rest I can not speak. To form the canal, two or three streams have been diverted a little from their original course, and led along a certain level in the valley through which they flowed to pour themselves into Champlain. In order to keep this level, a perpetually winding course has been taken, never, even for a few rods, approaching a straight line. On one side is the path beaten by the feet of the horses who drag the boats, but the other is an irregular bank, covered sometimes with grass and sometimes with shrubs or trees, and sometimes steep with rocks. I was delighted, on my journey to this place, to exchange a seat in a stage-coach, driven over the sandy and dusty road north of Saratoga by a sulky and careless driver, for a station on the top of the canal-packet. The weather was the finest 129 imaginable; the air that blew over the fields was sweet with the odor of clover blossoms, and of shrubs in flower. A canal, they say, is but a ditch; but this was as unlike

Library of Congress

a ditch as possible; it was rather a gentle stream, winding in the most apparently natural meanders. Goldsmith could find no more picturesque epithet for the canals of Holland, than “slow;” “The slow canal, the yellow blossomed vale—” but if the canals of that country had been like this, I am sure he would, have known how to say something better for them. On the left bank, grassed over to the water’s edge, I saw ripe strawberries peeping out among the clover, and shortly afterward a young man belonging to the packet, leaped on board from the other side with a large basket of very fine strawberries. “I gathered them,” said he “down in the swamp; the swamp is full of them.” We had them afterwards with our tea.

Proceeding still further, the scenery became more bold. Steep hills rose by the side of the canal, with farm-houses scattered at their feet; we passed close to perpendicular precipices, and rocky shelves sprouting with shrubs, and under impending woods. At length, a steep broad mountain rose before us, its sides shaded with scattered trees and streaked with long horizontal lines of rock, and at its foot a cluster of white houses. This was Whitehall; and here the waters of the canal plunge noisily through a rocky gorge 130 into the deep basin which holds the long and narrow Lake Champlain.

There was a young man on board who spoke English imperfectly, and whose accent I could not with certainty refer to any country or language with which I was acquainted. As we landed, he leaped on shore, and was surrounded at once by half a dozen persons chattering Canadian French. The French population of Canada has scattered itself along the shores of Lake Champlain for a third of the distance between the northern boundary of this state and the city of New York, and since the late troubles in Canada, more numerous than ever. In the hotel where I passed the night, most of the servants seemed to be emigrants from Canada.

Speaking of foreigners reminds me of an incident which occurred on the road between Saratoga Springs and Dunham's Basin. As the public coach stopped at a place called Emerson, our attention was attracted by a wagon-load of persons who had stopped at the

Library of Congress

inn, and were just resuming their journey. The father was a robust, healthy-looking man of some forty years of age; the mother a buxom dame; the children, some six or seven, of various ages, with flaxen hair, light-blue eyes, and broad ruddy cheeks. "They are Irish," said one of my fellow-passengers. I maintained on the contrary that they were Americans. "Git ap," said the man to his horses, pronouncing the last word very long. "Git ap; go 'lang." My antagonist in the dispute immediately acknowledged that I was right, for "git ap," 5 131 and "go 'lang" could never have been uttered with such purity of accent by an Irishman. We learned on inquiry that they were emigrants from the neighborhood, proceeding to the Western Canal, to take passage for Michigan, where the residence of a year or two will probably take somewhat from the florid ruddiness of their complexions.

I looked down into the basin which contains the waters of the Champlain, lying considerably below the level on which Whitehall is built, and could not help thinking that it was scooped to contain a wider and deeper collection of waters. Craggy mountains, standing one behind the other, surround it on all sides, from whose feet it seems as if the water had retired; and here and there, are marshy recesses between the hills, which might once have been the bays of the lake. The Burlington, one of the model steamboats for the whole world, which navigates the Champlain, was lying moored below. My journey, however, was to be by land.

At seven o'clock in the morning we set out from Whitehall, in a strong wagon, to cross the mountainous country lying east of the lake. "Git ap," said our good-natured driver to his cattle, and we climbed and descended one rugged hill after another, passing by cottages which we were told were inhabited by Canadian French. We had a passenger from Essex county, on the west side of the lake, a lady who, in her enthusiastic love of a mountainous country, seemed to wish that the hills were higher; and another from the prairies of the western states, who, 9* 132 accustomed for many years to the easy and noiseless gliding of carriages over the smooth summer roads of that region, could hardly restrain herself from exclaiming at every step against the ruggedness of the country, and the roughness of the ways. A third passenger was an emigrant from Vermont to Chataouque county, in

Library of Congress

the state of New York, who was now returning on a visit to his native county, the hills of Vermont, and who entertained us by singing some stanzas of what he called the Michigan song, much in vogue, as he said, in these parts before he emigrated, eight years ago. Here is a sample:

“They talk about Vermont, They say no state's like that: 'Tis true the girls are handsome,
The cattle top are fat. But who amongst its mountains Of cold and ice would stay, When he
can buy paraira In Michigan- *i-a?*”

By “paraira” you must understand prairie. “It is a most splendid song,” continued the singer. “It touches off one state after another. Connecticut, for example:”

“Connecticut has blue laws, And when the beer, on Sunday, Gets working in the barrel,
They flog it well on Monday.”

At Benson, in Vermont, we emerged upon a smoother country, a country of rich pastures, fields heavy with grass 133 almost ready for the scythe, and thick-leaved groves of the sugar-maple and the birch. Benson is a small, but rather neat little village, with three white churches, all of which appear to be newly built. The surrounding country is chiefly fitted for the grazing of flocks, whose fleeces, however, just at present, hardly pay for the shearing.

12

134

LETTER XVII. AN EXCURSION TO VERMONT AND NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Keene, New Hampshire, *July* 13, 1843.

I resume my journey where I stopped short in my last, namely, on reaching Benson, in Vermont, among the highlands west of Lake Champlain. We went on through a pastoral country of the freshest verdure, where we saw large flocks of sheep grazing. From time to time we had glimpses of the summits of a long blue ridge of mountains to the east of

Library of Congress

us, and now and then the more varied and airy peaks of the mountains which lie to the west of the lake. They told me that of late years this part of the country had suffered much from the grasshoppers, and that last summer, in particular, these insects had made their appearance in immense armies, devouring the plants of the ground and leaving it bare of herbage. "They passed across the country," said one person to me, "like hail storms, ravaging it in broad stripes, with intervals between in which they were less numerous."

At present, however, whether it was the long and severe winter which did not fairly end till the close of April, or whether it was the uncommonly showery weather of the 135 season hitherto, that destroyed these insects, in some early stage of their existence, I was told that there is now scarce a grasshopper in all these meadows and pastures. Everywhere the herbage was uncommonly luxuriant, and everywhere I saw the turf thickly sprinkled with the blossoms of the white clover, on the hill, in the valley, among rocks, by streams, by the road-side, and whenever the thinner shade of the woods allowed the plants of the field to take root. We might say of the white clover, with even more truth than Montgomery says of the daisy:—

"But this bold floweret climbs the hill, Hides in the forest, haunts the glen, Plays on the margin of the rill, Peeps o'er the fox's den."

All with whom I spoke had taken notice of the uncommon abundance of the white clover this year, and the idea seemed to prevail that it has its regular periods of appearing and disappearing,—remaining in the fields until it has taken up its nutriment in the soil, and then giving place to other plants, until they likewise had exhausted the qualities of the soil by which they were nourished. However this may be, its appearance this season in such profusion, throughout every part of the country which I have seen, is very remarkable. All over the highlands of Vermont and New Hampshire, in their valleys, in the gorges of their mountains, on the sandy banks of the Connecticut, the 136 atmosphere for many a league is perfumed with the odor of its blossoms.

Library of Congress

I passed a few days in the valley of one of those streams of northern Vermont, which find their way into Champlain. If I were permitted to draw aside the veil of private life, I would briefly give you the singular, and to me most interesting history of two maiden ladies who dwell in this valley. I would tell you how, in their youthful days, they took each other as companions for life, and how this union, no less sacred to them than the tie of marriage, has subsisted, in uninterrupted harmony, for forty years, during which they have shared each other's occupations and pleasures and works of charity while in health, and watched over each other tenderly in sickness; for sickness has made long and frequent visits to their dwelling. I could tell you how they slept on the same pillow and had a common purse, and adopted each other's relations, and how one of them, more enterprising and spirited in her temper than the other, might be said to represent the male head of the family, and took upon herself their transactions with the world without, until at length her health failed, and she was tended by her gentle companion, as a fond wife attends her invalid husband. I would tell you of their dwelling, encircled with roses, which now in the days of their broken health, bloom wild without their tendance, and I would speak of the friendly attentions which their neighbors, people of kind hearts and simple manners, seem to take pleasure in bestowing upon them, 137 but I have already said more than I fear they will forgive me for, if this should ever meet their eyes, and I must leave the subject.

One day I had taken a walk with a farmer of the place, over his extensive and luxuriant pastures, and was returning by the road, when a well-made young fellow in a cap. with thick curly hair, carrying his coat on his arm, wearing a red sash round his waist, and walking at a brisk pace, overtook us. "Etes-vous Canadien?"—are you a Canadian? said my companion. "Un peu"—a little—was the dry answer. "Where are you going?" asked the farmer again, in English. "To Middlebury," replied he, and immediately climbed a fence and struck across a field to save an angle in the road, as if perfectly familiar with the country

"These Canadian French," said the farmer, "come swarming upon us in the summer, when we are about to begin the hay-harvest, and of late years they are more numerous

Library of Congress

than formerly. Every farmer here has his French laborer at this season, and some two or three. They are hardy, and capable of long and severe labor; but many of them do not understand a word of our language, and they are not so much to be relied upon as our own countrymen; they, therefore, receive lower wages.”

“What do you pay them?”

“Eight dollars a month, is the common rate. When they leave your service, they make up their packs, and 12* 138 bring them for your inspection, that you may see that they have taken nothing which does not belong to them. I have heard of thefts committed by some of them, for I do not suppose that the best of the Canadians leave their homes for work, but I have always declined to examine their baggage when they quit my house.”

A shower drove us to take shelter in a farm-house by the road. The family spoke with great sympathy of John, a young French Canadian, “a gentlemanly young fellow,” they called him, who had been much in their family, and who had just come from the north, looking quite ill. He had been in their service every summer since he was a boy. At the approach of the warm weather, he annually made his appearance in rags, and in autumn he was dismissed, a sprucely-dressed lad, for his home.

On Sunday, as I went to church, I saw companies of these young Frenchmen, in the shade of barns or passing along the road; fellows of small but active persons, with thick locks and a lively physiognomy. The French have become so numerous in that region, that for them and the Irish, a Roman Catholic church has been erected in Middlebury, which, you know, is not a very large village.

On Monday morning, we took the stage-coach at Middlebury for this place. An old Quaker, in a broad-brimmed hat and a coat of the ancient cut; shaped somewhat like the upper shell of the tortoise, came to hand in his granddaughter, a middle-aged woman, whom he had that morning 139 accompanied from Lincoln, a place about eighteen miles distant, where there is a Quaker neighborhood and a Quaker meeting-house. The denomination

Library of Congress

of Quakers seems to be dying out in the United States, like the Indian race; not that the families become extinct, but pass into other denominations. It is very common to meet with neighborhoods formerly inhabited by Quakers, in which there is not a trace of them left. Not far from Middlebury, is a village on a fine stream, called Quaker Village, with not a Quaker in it. Everywhere they are laying aside their peculiarities of costume, and in many instances, also, their peculiarities of speech, which are barbarous enough as they actually exist, though, if they would but speak with grammatical propriety, their forms of discourse are as commodious as venerable, and I would be content to see them generally adopted. I hope they will be slow to lay aside their better characteristics: their abhorrence of violence, and the peaceful and wholesome subjection in which, of all religious denominations, they seem to have best succeeded in holding the passions. In such remote and secluded neighborhoods as Lincoln, their seet will probably make the longest stand against the encroachments of the world. I perceived, however, that the old gentleman's son, who was with him, and as I learned, was also a Quaker, had nothing peculiar in his garb.

Before sunset we were in sight of those magnificent mountain summits, the Pico, Killington Peak, and Shrewsbury Peak, rising in a deep ultra-marine blue among the 140 clouds that rolled about them, for the day was showery. We were set down at Rutland, where we passed the night, and the next morning crossed the mountains by the passes of Clarendon and Shrewsbury. The clouds were clinging to the summits, and we travelled under a curtain of mist, upheld on each side by mountain-walls. A young woman of uncommon beauty, whose forefinger on the right hand was dotted all over with punctures of the needle, and who was probably a mantua-maker, took a seat in the coach for a short distance. We made some inquiries about the country, but received very brief, though good-natured answers, for the young lady was a confirmed stammerer. I thought of an epigram I had somewhere read, in which the poet complimented a lady who had this defect, by saying that the words which she wished to utter were reluctant to leave so beautiful a mouth, and lingered long about the pearly teeth and rosy lips.

We passed through a tract covered with loose stones, and the Quaker's granddaughter, who proved to be a chatty person, told us a story which you may possibly have heard before. "Where did you get all the stones with which you have made these substantial fences?" said a visitor to his host, on whose grounds there appeared no lack of such materials. "Look about you in the fields, and you will see," was the answer. "I have looked," rejoined the questioner, "and do not perceive where a single stone is missing, and that is what has puzzled me."

141

Soon after reaching the highest elevation on the road, we entered the state of New Hampshire. Our way led us into a long valley formed by a stream, sometimes contracted between rough woody mountains, and sometimes spreading out, for a short distance, into pleasant meadows; and we followed its gradual descent until we reached the borders of the Connecticut. We crossed this beautiful river at Bellows Falls, where a neat and thriving village has its seat among craggy mountains, which, at a little distance, seem to impend over it. Here the Connecticut struggles and foams through a narrow passage of black rocks, spanned by a bridge. I believe this is the place spoken of in Peters's History of Connecticut, where he relates that the water of the river is so compressed in its passage between rocks, that an iron bar can not be driven into it.

A few miles below we entered the village of Walpole, pleasantly situated on the knolls to the east of the meadows which border the river. Walpole was once a place of some literary note, as the residence of Dennie, who, forty years since, or more, before he became the editor of the Port Folio, here published the Farmer's Museum, a weekly sheet, the literary department of which was amply and entertainingly filled.

Keene, which ended our journey in the stage-coach, is a flourishing village on the rich meadows of the Ashuelot, with hills at a moderate distance swelling upward on all sides. It is a village after the New England pattern, and 142 a beautiful specimen of its kind—broad

Library of Congress

streets planted with rock-maples and elms, neat white houses, white palings, and shrubs in the front inclosures.

During this visit to New Hampshire, I found myself in a hilly and rocky region, to the east of this place, and in sight of the summit of Monadnock, which, at no great distance from where I was, begins to upheave its huge dark mass above the surrounding country. I arrived, late in the evening, at a dwelling, the door of which was opened to me by two damsels, all health and smiles. In the morning I saw a third sister of the same florid bloom and healthful proportions. They were none of those slight, frail figures, copies of the monthly plates of fashion, with waists of artificial slenderness, which almost force you to wonder how the different parts of the body are kept together—no pallid faces, nor narrow chests, nor lean hands, but forms which might have satisfied an ancient statuary, with a well-formed bust, faces glowing with health, rounded arms, and plump fingers. They are such women, in short, as our mothers, fifty years ago, might have been. I had not observed any particular appearance of health in the females of the country through which I had passed; on the contrary, I had been disappointed in their general pallidness and look of debility. I inquired of my host if there was any cause to which this difference could be traced.

“I have no doubt of the cause,” replied he. “These girls are healthy, because I have avoided three great errors. 143 They have neither been brought up on unwholesome diet, nor subjected to unwholesome modes of dress, nor kept from daily exercise in the open air. They have never drunk tea or coffee, nor lived upon any other than plain and simple food. Their dress—you know that even the pressure of the easiest costume impedes the play of the lungs somewhat—their dress has never been so tight as to hinder free respiration and the proper expansion of the chest. Finally, they have taken exercise every day in the open air, assisting me in tending my fruit trees and in those other rural occupations in which their sex may best take part. Their parents have never enjoyed very

Library of Congress

good health; nor were the children particularly robust in their infancy, yet by a rational physical education, they have been made such as you see them.”

I took much pleasure in wandering through the woods in this region, where the stems of the primeval forest still stand—straight trunks of the beech, the maple, the ash, and the linden, towering to a vast height. The hollows are traversed by clear, rapid brooks. The mowing fields at that time were full of strawberries of large size and admirable flavor, which you could scarce avoid crushing by dozens as you walked. I would gladly have lingered, during a few more of these glorious summer days, in this wild country, but my engagements did not permit it, and here I am, about to take the stage-coach for Worcester and the Western Railroad.

144

LETTER XVIII. LIVERPOOL.—MANCHESTER.

Manchester, England, *May* 30, 1845.

I suppose a smoother passage was never made across the Atlantic, than ours in the good ship *Liverpool*. For two-thirds of the way, we slid along over a placid sea, before the gentlest zephyrs that ever swept the ocean, and when at length the winds became contrary, they only impeded our progress, without making it unpleasant. The *Liverpool* is one of the strongest, safest, and steadiest of the packet-ships; her commander prudent, skilful, always on the watch, and as it almost seemed to me, in every part of the vessel at once; the passengers were good-tempered and quiet, like the sea on which we were sailing; and with all these advantages in our favor, I was not disposed to repine that we were a week longer in crossing the Atlantic, than some vessels which left New York nearly the same time.

It was matter of rejoicing to all of us, however, when we saw the Irish coast like a faint cloud upon the horizon, and still more were we delighted, when after beating about for several days in what is called the Chops of the Channel, we 145 beheld the mountains of

Library of Congress

Wales. I could hardly believe that what I saw were actually mountain summits, so dimly were their outlines defined in the vapory atmosphere of this region, the nearer and lower steeps only being fully visible, and the higher and remoter ones half lost in the haze. It seemed to me as if I were looking at the reflection of mountains in a dull mirror, and I was ready to take out my pocket-handkerchief to wipe the dust and smoke from its surface. About thirty miles from Liverpool we took on board a pilot, whose fair complexion, unbronzed by the sun, was remarked by the ladies, and soon after a steamer arrived and took us in tow. At twelve o'clock in the night, the Liverpool by the aid of the high tide cleared the sand-bar at the mouth of the port, and was dragged into the dock, and the next morning when I awoke, I found myself in Liverpool in the midst of fog and rain.

"Liverpool," said one of its inhabitants to me, "is more like an American than an English city; it is new, bustling, and prosperous." I saw some evidences of this after I had got my baggage through the custom-house, which was attended with considerable delay, the officers prying very closely into the contents of certain packages which I was taking for friends of mine to their friends in England, cutting the packthread, breaking the seals, and tearing the wrappers without mercy. I saw the streets crowded with huge drays, carrying merchandise to and fro, and admired the solid construction of the docks, in which lay thousands 13 146 of vessels from all parts of the globe. The walls of these docks are built of large blocks of red sandstone, with broad gateways opening to the river Mersey, and when the tide is at its height, which I believe is about thirty feet from low water, the gates are open, and vessels allowed to enter and depart. When the tide begins to retire, the gates are closed, and the water and the vessels locked in together. Along the river for miles, the banks are flanked with this massive masonry, which in some places I should judge to be nearly forty feet in height. Meantime the town is spread ing into the interior; new streets are opened; in one field you may see the brickmakers occupied in their calling, and in the opposite one the bricklayers building rows of houses. New churches and new public buildings of various kinds are going up in these neighborhoods.

Library of Congress

The streets which contain the shops have for the most part a gay and showy appearance; the buildings are generally of stucco, and show more of architectural decoration than in our cities. The greater part of the houses, however, are built of brick which has a rough surface, and soon acquires in this climate a dark color, giving a gloomy aspect to the streets. The public buildings, which are rather numerous, are of a drab-colored freestone, and those which have been built for forty or fifty years, the Town Hall, for example, and some of the churches, appear almost of a sooty hue. I went through the rooms of the Town Hall and was shown the statue of Canning, by Chantry, an impressive 147 work as it seemed to me. One of the rooms contains a portrait of him by Lawrence, looking very much like a feeble old gentleman whom I remember as not long since an appraiser in the New York custom-house. We were shown a lofty saloon in which the Common Council of Liverpool enjoy their dinners, and very good dinners the woman who showed us the rooms assured us they were. But the spirit of corporation reform has broken in upon the old order of things, and those good dinners which a year or two since were eaten weekly, are now eaten but once a fortnight, and money is saved.

I strolled to the Zoological Gardens, a very pretty little place, where a few acres of uneven surface have been ornamented with plantations of flowering shrubs, many of which are now in full bloom, artificial ponds of water, rocks, and bridges, and picturesque buildings for the animals. Winding roads are made through the green turf, which is now sprinkled with daisies. It seems to be a favorite place of resort for the people of the town. They were amused by the tricks of an elephant, the performances of a band of music, which among other airs sang and played "Jim along Josey," and the feats of a young fellow who gave an illustration of the centrifugal force by descending a *Montagne Russe* in a little car, which by the help of a spiral curve in the railway, was made to turn a somerset in the middle of its passage, and brought him out at the end with his cap off and his hair on end.

Library of Congress

One of the most remarkable places in Liverpool, is St James's Cemetery. In the midst of the populous and bustling city, is a chasm among the black rocks, with a narrow green level at the bottom. It is overlooked by a little chapel. You enter it by an arched passage cut through the living rock, which brings you by a steep descent to the narrow level of which I have spoken, where you find yourself among graves set with flowers and half concealed by shrubbery, while along the rocky sides of the hollow in which you stand, you see tombs or blank arches for tombs which are yet to be excavated. We found the thickets within and around this valley of the dead, musical with innumerable birds, which build here undisturbed. Among the monuments is one erected to Huskisson; a, mausoleum with a glass door through which you see his statue from the chisel of Gibson. On returning by the passage through the rock, we found preparations making for a funeral service in the chapel, which we entered. Four men came staggering in under the weight of a huge coffin, accompanied by a clergyman of imposing stature, white hair, and florid complexion. Four other coffins were soon after brought in and placed in the church, attended by another clergyman of less prepossessing appearance, who, to my disappointment, read the service. He did it in the most detestable manner, with much grimace, and with the addition of a supernumerary syllable after almost every word ending with a consonant. The clerk delivered the responses in such a mumbling tone, and with so much of the Lancashire dialect, as to be almost unintelligible. The other clergyman looked, I thought, as if, like myself, he was sorry to hear the beautiful funeral service of his church so profaned.

In a drive which we took into the country, we had occasion to admire the much talked of verdure and ornamental cultivation of England. Green hedges, rich fields of grass sprinkled with flowers; beautiful residences, were on every side sprinkled with flowers, and the wheels of our carriage rolled over the smoothest roads in the world. The lawns before the houses are kept smoothly shaven, and carefully levelled by the roller. At one of these English houses, to which I was admitted by the hospitality of its opulent owner, I admired the variety of shrubs in full flower, which here grow in the open air, rhododendrons of various species, flushed with bloom, azaleas of different hues, one

Library of Congress

of which I recognized as American, and others of various families and names. In a neighboring field stood a plot of rye-grass two feet in height, notwithstanding the season was yet so early; and a part of it had been already mown for the food of cattle. Yet the people here complain of their climate. "You must get thick shoes and wrap yourself in flannel," said one of them to me. "The English climate makes us subject to frequent and severe colds, and here in Lancashire you have the worst climate of England, perpetually damp, with strong and chilly winds."

It is true that I have found the climate miserably chilly 150 since I landed, but I am told the season is a late one. The apple-trees are just in bloom, though there are but few of them to be seen, and the blossoms of the hawthorn are only just beginning to open. The foliage of some of the trees, rich as it is, bears the appearance in some places of having felt the late frosts, and certain kinds of trees are not yet in leaf.

Among the ornaments of Liverpool is the new park called Prince's Park, which a wealthy individual, Mr. Robert Yates, has purchased and laid out with a view of making it a place for private residences. It has a pretty little lake, plantations of trees and shrubs which have just begun to strike root, pleasant nooks and hollows, eminences which command extensive views, and the whole is traversed with roads which are never allowed to proceed from place to place in a straight line. The trees are too newly planted to allow me to call the place beautiful, but within a few years it will be eminently so.

I have followed the usual practice of travellers in visiting the ancient town of Chester, one of the old walled towns of England, distant about fifteen miles from. Liverpool—rambled through the long galleries open to the street, above the ground-story of the houses, entered its crumbling old churches of red freestone, one of which is the church of St. John, of Norman architecture, with round arches and low massive pillars, and looked at the grotesque old carvings representing events in Scripture history which ornament some 151 of the houses in Watergate-street. The walls are said to have been erected as early as the time of William the Conqueror, and here and there are towers rising above them. They are

Library of Congress

still kept in repair and afford a walk from which you enjoy a prospect of the surrounding country; but no ancient monument is allowed to stand in the way of modern improvements as they are called, and I found workmen at one corner tumbling down the stones and digging up the foundation to let in a railway. The river Dee winds pleasantly at the foot of the city walls. I was amused by an instance of the English fondness for hedges which I saw here. In a large green field a hawthorn hedge was planted, all along the city wall, as if merely for the purpose of hiding the hewn stone with a screen of verdure.

Yesterday we took the railway for Manchester. The arrangements for railway travelling in this country are much more perfect than with us. The cars of the first class are fitted up in the most sumptuous manner, cushioned at the back and sides, with a resting-place for your elbows, so that you sit in what is equivalent to the most luxurious armchair. Some of the cars intended for night travelling are so contrived that the seat can be turned into a kind of bed. The arrangement of springs and other contrivances to prevent shocks, and to secure an equable motion, are admirable and perfectly effectual. In one hour we had passed over the thirty-one miles which separate Manchester from 152 Liverpool; shooting rapidly over Chat Moss, a black blot in the green landscape, overgrown with heath, which, at this season of the year, has an almost sooty hue, crossing bridge after bridge of the most solid and elegant construction, and finally entered Manchester by a viaduct, built on massive arches, at a level with the roofs of the houses and churches. Huge chimneys surrounded us on every side, towering above the house-tops and the viaduct, and vomiting smoke like a hundred volcanoes. We descended and entered Marketstreet, broad and well-built, and in one of the narrowest streets leading into it, we were taken to our comfortable hotel.

At Manchester we walked through the different rooms of a large calico-printing establishment. In one were strongbodied men standing over huge caldrons ranged along a furnace, preparing and stirring up the colors; in another were the red-hot cylinders that singe the down from the cloth before it is stamped; in another the machines that stamp the colors and the heated rollers that dry the fabric after it is stamped. One of the machines

which we were shown applies three different colors by a single operation. In another part of the establishment was the apparatus for steaming the calicoes to fasten the colors; huge hollow iron wheels into which and out of which the water was continually running and revolving in another part to wash the superfluous dye from the stamped cloths; the operation of drying and pressing them came next and in a large 153 room, a group of young women, noisy, drab-like, and dirty, were engaged in measuring and folding them.

This morning we take the coach for the Peak of Derbyshire.

154

LETTER XIX. EDALE IN DERBYSHIRE.

Derby, England, *June 3*, 1845.

I have passed a few pleasant days in Derbyshire, the chronicle of which I will give you.

On the morning of the 30th of May, we took places at Manchester in the stage-coach for Chapel-en-le-Frith. We waited for some time before the door of the Three Angels in Market-street, the finest street in Manchester, broad and well-built, while the porters were busy in fastening to the vehicle the huge loads of luggage with which the English commonly travel. As I looked on the passers by, I was again struck with what I had observed almost immediately on entering the town—the portly figures and florid complexions of some, and the very diminutive stature and sallow countenances of others. Among the crowds about the coach, was a ruddy round-faced man in a box-coat and a huge woollen cravat, walking about and occasionally giving a look at the porters, whom we took to be the coachman, so well did his appearance agree with the description usually given of that class. We were not mistaken, for in 155 a short time we saw him buttoning his coat, and deliberately disentangling the lash from the handle of a long coach whip. We took our seats with him on the outside of the coach, and were rolled along smoothly through a level country of farms and hedge-rows, and fields yellow with buttercups, until at the distance of seven miles we reached Stockport, another populous manufacturing town

Library of Congress

lying in the smoke of its tall chimneys. At nearly the same distance beyond Stockport, the country began to swell into hills, divided by brooks and valleys, and the hedge-rows gave place to stone fences, which seamed the green region, bare of trees in every direction, separating it into innumerable little inclosures. A few miles further, brought us into that part of Derbyshire which is called the Peak, where the hills become mountains.

Among our fellow-passengers, was a powerfully made man, who had the appearance of being a commercial traveller, and was very communicative on the subject of the Peak, its caverns, its mines, and the old ruined castle of the Peverils, built, it is said, by one of the Norman invaders of England. He spoke in the Derbyshire dialect, with a strong provincial accent. When he was asked whether the castle was not the one spoken of by Scott, in his *Peveril of the Peak*, he replied,

“Scott? Scott? I dunna know him.”

Chapel-en-le-Frith is a manufacturing village at the bottom of a narrow valley, clean-looking, but closely built upon 156 narrow lanes; the houses are of stone, and have the same color as the highway. We were set down, with our Derbyshire friend, at the Prince's Arms, kept by John Clark, a jolly-looking man in knee-breeches, who claimed our fellow passenger as an old acquaintance. “I were at school with him,” said he; “we are both Peakerels.” John Clark, however, was the more learned man of the two, he knew something of Walter Scott; in the days when he was a coachman, he had driven the coach that brought him to the Peak, and knew that the ruined castle in the neighborhood was once the abode of Scott's *Peveril of the Peak*.

We procured here an odd vehicle called a car, with seats on the sides where the passengers sit facing each other, as in an omnibus, to take us to Edale, one of the valleys of Derbyshire. Our new acquaintintance, who was about to proceed on foot to one of the neighboring villages, was persuaded to take a seat with us as far as his road was the same with ours. We climbed out of the valley up the bare green hills, and here our driver,

Library of Congress

who was from Cheshire, and whose mode of speaking English made him unintelligible to us, pointed to a house on a distant road, and made an attempt to communicate something which he appeared to think interesting. Our Derbyshire friend translated him.

“The water,” said he, “that fall on one side of the roof of that 'ouse go into the 'Umer, and the water that fall on the other side go into the Mersey. Last winter that 'ouse were covered owre wi' snow, and they made a *h* archway 157 to go in and out. We 'ad a *h* eighteen month's storm last winter.”

By an “eighteen month's storm” we learned, on inquiry, that he meant eighteen weeks of continued cold weather, the last winter having been remarkable for its severity.

Our kind interpreter now left us, and took his way across the fields, down a path which led through a chasm between high tower-like rocks, called the Winnets, which etymologists say is a corruption of Windgates, a name given to this mountain-pass from the currents of air which are always blowing through it. Turning out of the main road, we began to ascend a steep green declivity. To the right of us rose a peaked summit, the name of which our driver told us was Mam Tor. We left the vehicle and climbed to its top, where a wide and beautiful prospect was out-spread before us. To the north lay Edale, a deep and almost circular valley, surrounded by a wavy outline of pastoral hills, bare of trees, but clothed in living green to their summits, except on the northern side of the valley, where, half-way down, they were black with a thick growth of health. At the bottom of the valley winded a little stream, with a fringe of trees, some of which on account of the lateness of the season were not yet in leaf, and near this stream were scattered, for the most part, the habitations. In another direction lay the valley of Hopedale, with its two villages, Hope and Castleton, its ancient castle of the Peverils seated on a rock over the entrance of the Peak Cavern, and its lead 11 158 mines worked ever since the time of the Saxons, the Odin mines as they are called, the white cinders of which lay in heaps at their entrance. We left the driver to take our baggage to its destination, and pursued our way across the fields. Descending a little distance from the summit, we came upon what appeared to be an ancient trench,

Library of Congress

thickly overgrown with grass, which seemed to encircle the upper part of the hill. It was a Roman circumvallation. The grass was gemmed with wild pansies, yellow, "freaked with jet," and fragrant, some of which we gathered for a memorial of the spot.

In descending to the valley, we came upon a little rivulet among hazels and hollies and young oaks, as wild and merry as a mountain brook of our own country. Cowslips and wild hyacinths were in flower upon its banks, and blue violets as scentless as our own. We followed it until it fell into the larger stream, when we crossed a bridge and arrived at a white house, among trees just putting out their leaves with plots of flowers in the lawn before it. Here we received a cordial welcome from a hospitable and warmhearted Scotchman.

After dinner our host took us up the side of the mountain which forms the northern barrier of Edale. We walked through a wretched little village, consisting of low cottages built of stone, one or two of which were alehouses; passed the parsonage, pleasantly situated on the edge of a little brook, and then the parson himself, a young man just from Cambridge, 159 who was occupied in sketching one of the picturesque points in the scenery about his new habitation. A few minutes active climbing brought us among the heath, forming a thick elastic carpet under our feet, on which we were glad to seat ourselves for a moment's rest. We heard the cuckoo upon every side, and when we rose to pursue our walk we frequently startled the moor-fowl, singly or in flocks. The time allowed by the game laws for shooting them had not yet arrived, but in the mean time they had been unmercifully hunted by the hawks, for we often found the remains of such as had been slain by these winged sportsmen, lying in our path as we ascended. We found on the top of the hill, a level of several rods in width, covered to a considerable depth with peat, the produce of the decayed roots of the heath, which has sprung and perished for centuries. It was now soft with the abundant rains which had fallen, and seamed with, deep muddy cracks, over which we made our way with difficulty. At length we came to a spot from which we could look down into another valley. "That," said our host, "is the Woodlands." We looked and

Library of Congress

saw a green hollow among the hills like Edale, but still more bare of trees, though like Edale it had its little stream at the bottom.

The next day we crossed the Mam, Tor a second time, on a visit to the Derbyshire mines. On our way, I heard the lark for the first time. The little bird, so frequently named in English poetry, rose singing from the grass almost perpendicularly, 160 until nearly lost to the sight in the clouds, floated away, first in one direction, then in another, descended towards the earth, arose again, pouring forth a perpetual, uninterrupted stream of melody, until at length, after the space of somewhat more than a quarter of an hour, he reached the ground, and closed his flight and his song together. The caverns which contain the Derbyshire spars of various kinds, have been the frequent theme of tourists, and it is hardly worth while to describe them for the thousandth time. Imagine a fissure in the limestone rock, descending obliquely five hundred feet into the bowels of the earth, with a floor of fallen fragments of rock and sand; jagged walls, which seem as if they would fit closely into each other if they could be brought together, sheeted, in many places, with a glittering, calcareous deposit, and gradually approaching each other overhead—imagine this, and you will have an idea of the Blue John mine, into which we descended. The fluor-spar taken from this mine is of a rich blue color, and is wrought into vases and cups, which were extremely beautiful.

The entrance to the Peak Cavern, as it is called, is very grand. A black opening, of prodigious extent, yawns in the midst of a precipice nearly three hundred feet in height, and you proceed for several rods in this vast portico, before the cave begins to contract to narrower dimensions. At a little distance from this opening, a fine stream rushes rapidly from under the limestone, and flows through the village. Above, 161 and almost impending over the precipice, is the castle of the Peverils, the walls of which, built of a kind of stone which retains the chisel marks made eight hundred years since, are almost entire, though the roof has long ago fallen in, and trees are growing in the corners. “Here lived the English noblemen,” said our friend, “when they were robbers—before they became gentlemen.” The castle is three stories in height, and the space within its thick and strong

Library of Congress

walls is about twenty-five feet square. These would be thought narrow quarters by the present nobility, the race of gentlemen who have succeeded to the race of robbers.

The next day we attended the parish church. The young clergyman gave us a discourse on the subject of the Trinity, and a tolerably clever one, though it was only sixteen minutes long. The congregation were a healthy, though not a very intelligent looking set of men and women. The Derbyshire people have a saying— “Derbyshire born, and Derbyshire bred, Strong o’ the yarm and weak o’ the yead.” The latter line, translated into English, would be — “Strong of the arm, and weak of the head;” and I was assured that, like most proverbs, it had a good deal of truth in it. The laboring people of Edale and its neighborhood, so far as I could learn, are not remarkable for good morals, and indifferent, or worse than indifferent, to the education of their children. They are, however, more fortunate in regard to the wages of their labor, than in many other agricultural districts. A manufactory for preparing cotton thread for the lace-makers, has been established in Edale, and the women and girls of the place, who are employed in it, are paid from seven to eight shillings a week. The farm. laborers receive from twelve to thirteen shillings a week, which is a third more than is paid to the same class in some other counties.

The people of the Peak, judging from the psalmody I heard at church, are not without an ear for music. “I was at a funeral, not long since,” said our host; “a young man, born deaf and dumb, had gone mad and cut his throat. The people came from far and near to the burial. Hot ale was handed about and drunk in silence, and a candle stood on the table, at which the company lighted their pipes. The only sound to be heard was the passionate sobbing of the father. At last the funeral service commenced, and the hymn being given out, they set it to a tune in the minor key, and I never heard any music performed in a manner more pathetic.”

On Monday we left Edale, and a beautiful drive we had along the banks of the Derwent, woody and rocky, and wild enough in some places to be thought a river of our own country. Of our visit to Chatsworth, the seat of the Duke of Devonshire, one of the

Library of Congress

proudest of the modern English nobility, and to Haddon Hall, the finest specimen remaining of Oie the residences of their, ancestors, I will say

MATHLOCK BATH.

163 nothing, for these have already been described till people are tired of reading them. We passed the night at Matlock in sight of the rock called the High Tor. In the hot season it swarms with cockneys, and to gratify their taste, the place, beautiful as it is with precipices and woods, has been spoiled by mock ruins and fantastic names. There is a piece of scene-painting, for example, placed conspicuously among the trees on the hill-side, representing an ancient tower, and another representing an old church. One place of resort is called the Romantic Rocks, and another the Lover's Walk.

To-day we arrived at Derby, and hastened to see its Arboretum. This is an inclosure of eleven acres, given by the late Mr. Josiah Strutt to the town, and beautifully laid out by London, author of the work on Rural Architecture. It is planted with every kind of tree and shrub which will grow in the open air of this climate, and opened to the public for a perpetual place of resort. Shall we never see an example of the like munificence in New York?

164

LETTER XX. WORKS OF ART.

London, *June* 18, 1845.

I have now been in London a fortnight. Of course you will not expect me to give you what you will find in the guide-books and the "Pictures of London."

The town is yet talking of a statue of a Greek slave, by our countryman Powers, which was to be seen a few days since at a print-shop in Pall Mall. I went to look at it. The statue represents a Greek girl exposed naked for sale in the slave-market. Her hands are fettered, the drapery of her nation lies at her feet, and she is shrinking from the public

Library of Congress

gaze. I looked at it with surprise and delight; I was dazzled with the soft fullness of the outlines, the grace of the attitude, the noble, yet sad expression of the countenance, and the exquisite perfection of the workmanship. I could not help acknowledging a certain literal truth in the expression of Byron, concerning a beautiful statue, that it “— fills The air around with beauty.”

165

It has fixed the reputation of Powers, and made his fortune. The possessor of the statue, a Mr. Grant, has refused to dispose of it, except to a public institution. The value which is set upon it, may be inferred from this circumstance, that one of the richest noblemen in England told the person who had charge of the statue, that if Mr. Grant would accept two thousand pounds sterling for it, he should be glad to send him a check for the amount. Some whispers of criticism have been uttered, but they appear to have been drowned and silenced in the general voice of involuntary admiration. I hear that since the exhibition of the statue, orders have been sent to Powers from England, for works of sculpture which will keep him employed for years to come.

The exhibition of paintings by the Royal Academy is now open. I see nothing in it to astonish one who has visited the exhibitions of our Academy of the Arts of Design in New York, except that some of the worst pictures were hung in the most conspicuous places. This is the case with four or five pictures by Turner—a great artist, and a man of genius, but who paints very strangely of late years. To my unlearned eyes, they were mere blotches of white paint, with streaks of yellow and red, and without any intelligible design. To use a phrase very common in England, they are the most extraordinary pictures I ever saw. Haydon also has spoiled several yards of good canvas with a most hideous picture of Uriel and Satan, and 166 to this is assigned one of the very best places in the collection. There is more uniformity of style and coloring than with us; more appearance of an attempt to conform to a certain general model, so that of course there are fewer unpleasant contrasts of manner: but this is no advantage, inasmuch as it prevents the artist from seeking to attain excellence in the way for which he is best fitted. The number of

Library of Congress

paintings is far greater than in our exhibitions; but the proportion of good ones is really far smaller. There are some extremely clever things by Webster, who appears to be a favorite with the public; some fine miniatures by Thorburn, a young Scotch artist who has suddenly become eminent, and several beautiful landscapes by Stanfield, an artist of high promise. We observed in the catalogue, the names of three or four of our American artists; but on looking for their works, we found them all hung so high as to, be out of sight, except one, and that was in what is called the condemned room, where only a glimmer of light enters, and where the hanging committee are in the practice of thrusting any such pictures as they can not help exhibiting, but wish to keep in the dark.

My English friends apologize for the wretchedness of the collection, its rows of indifferent portraits and its multitude of feeble imitations in historical and landscape painting, by saying that the more eminent artists are preparing themselves to paint the walls and ceilings of the new Houses of Parliament in fresco. The pinnacles and turrets of that 167 vast and magnificent structure, built of a cream-colored stone, and florid with Gothic tracery, copied from the ancient chapel of St. Stephen, the greater part of which was not long ago destroyed by fire, are rising from day to day above the city roofs. We walked through its broad and long passages and looked into its unfinished halls, swarming with stone-cutters and masons, and thought that if half of them were to be painted in fresco, the best artists of England have the work of years before them.

With the exhibition of drawings in water-colors, which is a separate affair from the paintings in oil, I was much better pleased. The late improvement in this branch of art, is, I believe, entirely due to English artists. They have given to their drawings of this class a richness, a force of effect, a depth of shadow and strength of light, and a truth of representation which astonishes those who are accustomed only to the meagreness and tenuity of the old manner. I have hardly seen any landscapes which exceeded, in the perfectness of the illusion, one or two which I saw in the collection I visited, and I could hardly persuade myself that a flower-piece on which I looked, representing a bunch of

hollyhocks, was not the real thing after all, so crisp were the leaves, so juicy the stalks, and with such skilful relief was flower heaped upon flower and leaf upon leaf.

168

LETTER XXI THE PARKS OF LONDON.—THE POLICE.

London, *June* 24, 1845.

Nothing can be more striking to one who is accustomed to the little inclosures called public parks in our American cities, than the spacious, open grounds of London. I doubt, in fact, whether any person fully comprehends their extent, from any of the ordinary descriptions of them, until he has seen them or tried to walk over them. You begin at the east end of St. James's Park, and proceed along its gravelled walks, and its colonnades of old trees, among its thickets of ornamental shrubs carefully inclosed, its grass-plots maintained in perpetual freshness and verdure by the moist climate and the ever-dropping skies, its artificial sheets of water covered with aquatic birds of the most beautiful species, until you begin almost to wonder whether the park has a western extremity. You reach it at last, and proceed between the green fields of Constitution Hill, when you find yourself at the corner of Hyde Park, a much more spacious pleasure-ground. You proceed westward in Hyde Park until you are weary, when you find yourself on the verge of Kensington Gardens, a vast extent of ancient woods and intervening lawns, to which the eye sees no limit, and in whose walks it seems as if the whole population of London might lose itself. North of Hyde Park, after passing a few streets, you reach the great square of Regent's Park, where, as you stand at one boundary the other is almost undistinguishable in the dull London atmosphere. North of this park rises Primrose Hill, a bare, grassy eminence, which I hear has been purchased for a public ground and will be planted with trees. All round these immense inclosures, presses the densest population of the civilized world. Within, such is their extent, is a fresh and pure atmosphere, and the odors of plants and flowers, and the twittering of innumerable birds more musical than those of our own woods, which build and rear their young here, and the hum of insects in the sunshine. Without are

Library of Congress

close and crowded streets, swarming with foot-passengers, and choked with drays and carriages.

These parks have been called the lungs of London, and so important are they regarded to the public health and the happiness of the people, that I believe a proposal to dispense with some part of their extent, and cover it with streets and houses, would be regarded in much the same manner as a proposal to hang every tenth man in London. They will probably remain public grounds as long as London has an existence.

The population of your city, increasing with such prodigious rapidity; your sultry summers, and the corrupt atmosphere generated in hot and crowded streets, make it a cause of regret that in laying out New York, no preparation was made, while it was yet practicable, for a range of parks and public gardens along the central part of the island or elsewhere, to remain perpetually for the refreshment and recreation of the citizens during the torrid heats of the warm season. There are yet unoccupied lands on the island which might, I suppose, be procured for the purpose. and which, on account of their rocky and uneven surface, might be laid out into surpassingly beautiful pleasuregrounds; but while we are discussing the subject the advancing population of the city is sweeping over them and covering them from our reach.

If we go out of the parks into the streets we find the causes of a corrupt atmosphere much more carefully removed than with us. The streets of London are always clean. Every day, early in the morning, they are swept; and some of them, I believe, at other hours also, by a machine drawn by one of the powerful dray-horses of this country. Whenever an unusually large and fine horse of this breed is produced in the country, he is sent to the London market, and remarkable animals they are, of a height and stature almost elephantine, large-limbed, slowpaced, shaggy-footed, sweeping the ground with their fetlocks, each huge foot armed with a shoe weighing from five to six pounds. One of these strong creatures is harnessed to a street-cleaning machine, which consists of brushes turning over a cylinder and sweeping the dust of the streets into a kind of box. Whether

Library of Congress

it be wet or dry dust, or mud, the work is thoroughly performed; it is all drawn into the receptacle provided for it, and the huge horse stalks backward and forward along the street until it is almost as clean as a drawingroom

I called the other day on a friend, an American, who told me that he had that morning spoken with his landlady about her carelessness in leaving the shutters of her lower rooms unclosed during the night. She answered that she never took the trouble to close them, that so secure was the city from ordinary burglaries, under the arrangements of the new police, that it was not worth the trouble. The windows of the parlor next to my sleeping-room open upon a rather low balcony over the street door, and they are unprovided with any fastenings, which in New York we should think a great piece of negligence. Indeed, I am told that these night robberies are no longer practiced, except when the thief is assisted by an accessory in the house. All classes of the people appear to be satisfied with the new police. The officers are men of respectable appearance and respectable manners. If I lose my way, or stand in need of any local information, I apply to a person in the uniform of a police officer. They are sometimes more stupid in regard to these matters than there is any occasion for, but it is one of the duties of their office to assist strangers with local information.

Begging is repressed by the new police regulations, and beggars skulk in holes and corners, and prefer their petitions where it can not be overheard by men armed with the authority of the law. "There is a great deal of famine in London," said a friend to me the other day, "but the police regulations drive it out of sight." I was going through Oxford-street lately, when I saw an elderly man of small stature, poorly dressed, with a mahogany complexion, walking slowly before me. As I passed him he said in my ear, with a hollow voice, "I am starving to death with hunger," and these words and that hollow voice sounded in my ear all day.

Walking in Hampstead Heath a day or two since, with an English friend, we were accosted by two laborers, who were sitting on a bank, and who said that they had come to that neighborhood in search of employment in haymaking, but had not been able to get

Library of Congress

either work or food. My friend appeared to distrust their story. But in the evening, as we were walking home, we passed a company of some four or five laborers in frocks, with bludgeons in their hands, who asked us for something to eat. "You see how it is, gentlemen," said one of them, "we are hungry; we have come for work, and nobody will, hire us; we have had nothing to eat all day." Their tone was dissatisfied, almost menacing; and the Englishman who was with us, 173 referred to it several times afterward, with an expression of anxiety and alarm.

I hear it often remarked here, that the difference of condition between the poorer and the richer classes becomes greater every day, and what the end will be the wisest pretend not to foresee. 15*

174

LETTER XXII. EDINBURGH.

Edinburgh, *July* 17, 1845.

I had been often told, since I arrived in England, that in Edinburgh, I should see the finest city I ever saw. I confess that I did not feel quite sure of this, but it required scarcely more than a single look to show me that it was perfectly true. It is hardly possible to imagine a nobler site for a town than that of Edinburgh, and it is built as nobly. You stand on the edge of the deep gulf which separates the old and the new town, and before you on the opposite bank rise the picturesque buildings of the ancient city— "Piled deep and massy, close and high," looking, in their venerable and enduring aspect, as if they were parts of the steep bank on which they stand, an original growth of the rocks; as if, when the vast beds of stone crystallized from the waters, or cooled from their fusion by fire, they formed themselves by some freak of nature into this fantastic resemblance of the habitations of men. To the right your eyes rest upon a crag crowned with a grand old castle of the middle ages, on which guards are marching 175 to and fro; and near you to the left, rises the rocky summit of Carlton Hill, with its monuments of the great men of Scotland. Behind you

Library of Congress

stretch the broad streets of the new town, overlooked by massive structures, built of the stone of the Edinburgh quarries, which have the look of palaces.

“Streets of palaces and walks of slate,” form the new town. Not a house of brick or wood exists in Edinburgh; all are constructed of the excellent and lasting stone which the earth supplies almost close to their foundations, High and solid bridges of this material, with broad arches, connect the old town with the new, and cross the deep ravine of the Cowgate in the old town, at the bottom of which you see a street between prodigiously high buildings, swarming with the poorer population of Edinburgh.

From almost any of the eminences of the town you see spread below you its magnificent bay, the Frith of Forth, with its rocky islands; and close to the old town rise the lofty summits of Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crag, a solitary, silent, mountainous district, without habitations or inclosures, grazed by flocks of sheep. To the west flows Leith-water in its deep valley, spanned by a noble bridge, and the winds of this chilly climate that strike the stately buildings of the new town, along the cliffs that border this glen, come from the very clouds. Beyond the Frith lie the hills of Fifieshire; a glimpse of the blue Grampian ridges is seen where the Frith contracts in the northwest to a narrow 176 channel, and to the southwest lie the Pentland hills, whose springs supply Edinburgh with water. All around you are places the names of which are familiar names of history, poetry, and romance.

From this magnificence of nature and art, the transition was painful to what I saw of the poorer population. On Saturday evening I found myself at the market, which is then held in High-street and the Netherbow, just as you enter the Canongate, and where the old wooden effigy of John Knox, with staring black eyes, freshly painted every year, stands in its pulpit, and still seems preaching to the crowd. Hither a throng of sickly-looking, dirty people, bringing with them their unhealthy children, had crawled from the narrow wynds or alleys on each side of the street. We entered several of these wynds, and passed down one of them, between houses of vast height, story piled upon story, till we came to the deep hollow of the Cowgate. Children were swarming in the way, all of them, bred in that

Library of Congress

close and impure atmosphere, of a sickly appearance, and the aspect of premature age in some of them, which were carried in arms, was absolutely frightful. "Here is misery," said a Scotch gentleman, who was my conductor. I asked him how large a proportion of the people of Edinburgh belonged to that wretched and squalid class which I saw before me. "More than half," was his reply. I will not vouch for the accuracy of his statistics. Of course his estimate was but a conjecture.

177

In the midst of this population is a House of Refuge for the Destitute, established by charitable individuals for the relief of those who may be found in a state of absolute destitution of the necessaries of life. Here they are employed in menial services, lodged and fed until they can be sent to their friends, or employment found for them. We went over the building, a spacious structure, in the Canongate, of the plainest Puritan architecture, with wide low rooms, which, at the time of the union of Scotland with England, served as the mansion of the Duke of Queensbury. The accommodations of course are of the humblest kind. We were shown into the sewing-room, where we saw several healthy-looking young women at work, some of them barefooted. Such of the inmates as can afford it, pay for their board from three and sixpence to five shillings a week, besides their labor.

In this part of the city also are the Night Asylums for the Houseless. Here, those who find themselves without a shelter for the night, are received into an antechamber, provided with benches, where they first get a bowl of soup, and are then introduced into a bathing-room, where they are stripped and scoured. They are next furnished with clean garments and accommodated with a lodging on an inclined plane of planks, a little raised from the floor, and divided into proper compartments by strips of board. Their own clothes are, in the mean time, washed, and returned to them when they leave the place.

178

Library of Congress

It was a very different spectacle from the crowd in the Saturday evening market, that met my eyes the next morning in the clean and beautiful streets of the new town; the throng of well-dressed church-goers passing each other in all directions. The women, it appeared to me, were rather gaily dressed, and a large number of them prettier than I had seen in some of the more southern cities.

I attended worship in one of the Free Churches, as they are called, in which Dr. Candlish officiates. In the course of his sermon, he read long portions of an address from the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, appointing the following Thursday as a day of fasting and prayer, on account of the peculiar circumstances of the time, and more especially the dangers flowing from the influence of popery, alluding to the grant of money lately made by parliament to the Roman Catholic College at Maynooth. The address proposed no definite opposition, but protested against the measure in general, and, as it seemed to me, rather vague terms. In the course of the address the title of National Church was claimed for the Free Church, notwithstanding its separation from the government, and the era of that separation was referred to in phrases similar to those in which we speak of our own declaration of national independence. There were one or two allusions to the persecutions which the Free Church had suffered, and something was said about her children being hunted like partridges upon the mountains; but it is clear, that if her ministers 179 have been hunted, they have been hunted into fine churches; and if persecuted, they have been persecuted into comfortable livings. This Free Church, as far as I can learn, is extremely prosperous.

Dr. Candlish is a fervid preacher, and his church was crowded. In the afternoon I attended at one of the churches of the established or endowed Presbyterian Church, where a quiet kind of a preacher held forth, and the congregation was thin.

This Maynooth grant has occasioned great dissatisfaction in England and Scotland. If the question had been left to be decided by the public opinion of these parts of the kingdom, the grant would never have been made. An immense majority, of all classes and almost

Library of Congress

all denominations, disapprove of it. A dissenting clergyman of one of the evangelical persuasions, as they are called, said to me—"The dissenters claim nothing from the government; they hold that it is not the business of the state to interfere in religious matters, and they object to bestowing the public money upon the seminaries of any religions denomination." In a conversation which I had with an eminent man of letters, and a warm friend of the English Church, he said: "The government is giving offence to many who have hitherto been its firmest supporters. There was no necessity for the Maynooth grant; the Catholics would have been as well satisfied without it as they are with it; for you see they are already clamoring for the right to appoint through their 180 Bishops the professors in the new Irish colleges. The Catholics were already establishing their schools, and building their churches with their own means: and this act of applying the money of the nation to the education of their priests is a gratuitous offence offered by the government to its best friends." In a sermon which I heard from the Dean of York, in the magnificent old minster of that city, he commended the liberality of the motives which had induced the government to make the grant, but spoke of the measure as one which the friends of the English Church viewed with apprehension and anxiety.

"They may dismiss their fears," said a shrewd friend of mine, with whom I was discussing the subject. "Endowments are a cause of lukewarmness and weakness. Our Presbyterian friends here, instead of protesting so vehemently against what Sir Robert Peel has done, should thank him for endowing the Catholic Church, for in doing it he has deprived it of some part of its hold upon the minds of men."

There is much truth, doubtless, in this remark. The support of religion to be effectual should depend upon individual zeal. The history of the endowed chapels of dissenting denominations in England is a curious example of this. Congregations have fallen away and come to nothing, and it is a general remark that nothing is so fatal to a sect as a liberal endowment, which provides for the celebration of public worship without individual contributions.

LETTER XXIII. THE SCOTTISH LAKES.

Glasgow, *July* 19, 1845.

I must not leave Scotland without writing you another letter.

On the 17th of this month I embarked at Newhaven, in the environs of Edinburgh, on board the little steamer Prince Albert, for Stirling. On our way we saw several samples of the Newhaven fishwives, a peculiar race, distinguished by a costume of their own; fresh-colored women, who walk the streets of Edinburgh with a large wickerbasket on their shoulders, a short blue cloak of coarse cloth under the basket, short blue petticoats, thick blue stockings, and a white cap. I was told that they were the descendants of a little Flemish colony, which long ago settled at Newhaven, and that they are celebrated for the readiness and point of their jokes, which, like those of their sisters of Billingsgate, are not always of the most delicate kind. Several of these have been related to me, but on running them over in my mind, I find, to my dismay, that none of them will look well on paper. The wit of the Newhaven fishwives seems to me, however, like that of our western 16 182 boatmen, to consist mainly in the ready application of quaint sayings already current among themselves.

It was a wet day, with occasional showers, and sometimes a sprinkling of Scotch mist. I tried the cabin, but the air was too close. The steamboats in this country have but one deck, and that deck has no shelter, so I was content to stand in the rain for the sake of the air and scenery. After passing an island or two, the Frith, which forms the bay of Edinburgh, contracts into the river Forth. We swept by country seats, one of which was pointed out as the residence of the late Dugald Stewart, and another that of the Earl of Elgin, the plunderer of the Parthenon; and castles, towers, and churches, some of them in ruins ever since the time of John Knox, and hills half seen in the fog, until we came opposite to the Ochil mountains, whose grand rocky buttresses advanced from the haze

Library of Congress

almost to the river. Here, in the windings of the Forth, our steamer went many times backward and forward, first towards the mountains and then towards the level country to the south, in almost parallel courses, like the track of a ploughman in a field. At length we passed a ruined tower and some fragments of massy wall which once formed a part of Cambus Kenneth Abbey, seated on the rich lands of the Forth, for the monks, in Great Britain at least, seem always to have chosen for the site of their monasteries, the banks of a stream which would supply them with trout and salmon for Fridays. We were now in the presence of the rocky 183 hills of Stirling, with the town on its declivity, and the ancient castle, the residence of the former kings of Scotland, on its summit.

We went up through the little town to the castle, which is still kept in perfect order, and the ramparts of which frown as grimly over the surrounding country as they did centuries ago. No troops however are now stationed here; a few old gunners alone remain, and Major somebody, I forget his name, takes his dinners in the banqueting-room and sleeps in the bed-chamber of the Stuarts. I wish I could communicate the impression which this castle and the surrounding region made upon me, with its vestiges of power and magnificence, and its present silence and desertion. The passages to the dungeons where pined the victims of state, in the very building where the court held its revels, lie open, and the chapel in which princes and princesses were christened, and worshipped, and were crowned and wed, is turned into an armory. From its windows we were shown, within the inclosure of the castle, a green knoll, grazed by cattle, where the disloyal nobles of Scotland were beheaded. Close to the castle is a green field, intersected with paths, which we were told was the tilting-ground, or place of tournaments, and beside it rises a rock; where the ladies of the court sat to witness the combats, and which is still called the Ladies' Rock. At the foot of the hill, to the right of the castle, stretches what was once the royal park; it is shorn of its trees, part 184 is converted into a race-course, part into a pasture for cows, and the old wall which marked its limits is fallen down. Near it you see a cluster of grassy embankments of a curious form, circles and octagons and parallelograms, which bear the name of King James's Knot, and once formed a part of

Library of Congress

the royal-gardens, where the sovereign used to divert himself with his courtiers. The cows now have the spot to themselves, and have made their own paths and alleys all over it. "Yonder, to the southwest of the castle," said a sentinel who stood at the gate, "you see where a large field has been lately ploughed, and beyond it another, which looks very green. That green field is the spot where the battle of Bannockburn was fought, and the armies of England were defeated by Bruce." I looked, and so fresh and bright was the verdure, that it seemed to me as if the earth was still fertilized with the blood of those who fell in that desperate struggle for the crown of Scotland. Not far from this, the spot was shown us where Wallace was defeated at the battle of Falkirk. This region is now the scene of another and an unbloody warfare; the warfare between, the Free Church and the Government Church. Close to the church of the establishment, at the foot of the rock of Stirling, the soldiers of the Free Church have erected their place of worship, and the sound of hammers from the unfinished interior could be heard almost up to the castle.

We took places the same day in the coach for Callander, in the Highlands. In a short time we came into a country 185 of hillocks and pastures brown. and barren, half covered with ferns, the breckan of the Scotch, where the broom flowered gaudily by the road-side, and harebells now in bloom, in little companies, were swinging, heavy with the rain, on their slender stems.

Crossing the Teith we found ourselves in Doune, a Highland village, just before entering which we passed a throng of strapping lasses, who had just finished their daily task at a manufactory on the Teith, and were returning to their homes. Between Doune and Callander we passed the woods of Cambus-More, full of broad beeches, which delight in the tenacious mountain soil of this district. This was the seat of a friend of the Scott family, and here Sir Walter in his youth passed several summers, and became familiar with the scenes which he has so well described in his *Lady of the Lake*. At Callander we halted for the night among a crowd of tourists, Scotch, English, American, and German, more numerous than the inn at which we stopped could hold. I went out into the street to get a look at the place, but a genuine Scotch mist covering me with water soon compelled me

Library of Congress

to return. I heard the people, a well-limbed brawny race of men, with red hair and beards, talking to each other in Gaelic, and saw through the fogs only a glimpse of the sides of the mountains and crags which surrounded the village.

The next morning was uncommonly bright and clear, and we set out early for the Trosachs. We now saw that the 16* 186 village of Callander lay under a dark crag, on the banks of the Teith, winding pleasantly among its alders, and overlooked by the grand summit of Benledi, which rises to the height of three thousand feet. A short time brought us to the stream “Which, daughter of three mighty lakes, From Vennachar in silver breaks,” and we skirted the lake for nearly its whole length. Loch Vennachar lies between hills of comparatively gentle declivity, pastured by flocks, and tufted with patches of the prickly gorse and coarse ferns. On its north bank lies Lanrick Mead, a little grassy level where Scott makes the tribe of Clan Alpine assemble at the command of Roderick Dhu. At a little distance from Vennachar lies Loch Achray, which we reached by a road winding among shrubs and low trees, birches, and wild roses in blossom, with which the air was fragrant. Crossing a little stone bridge, which our driver told us was the Bridge of Turk, we were on the edge of Loch Achray, a little sheet of water surrounded by wild rocky hills, with here and there an interval of level grassy margin, or a grove, beside the water. Turning from Loch Achray we reached an inn with a Gaelic name, which I have forgotten how to spell, and which if I were to spell it, you could not pronounce. This was on the edge of the Trosachs, and here we breakfasted.

187

It is the fashion, I believe, for all tourists to pass through the Trosachs on foot. The mob of travellers, with whom I found myself on the occasion—there were some twenty of them—did so, to a man; even the ladies, who made about a third of the number, walked. The distance to Loch Katrine is about a mile and a half, between lofty mountains, along a glen filled with masses of rock, which seem to have been shaken by some convulsion of nature

Library of Congress

from the high steeps on either side, and in whose shelves and crevices time had planted a thick wood of the birch and ash.

But I will not describe the Trosachs after Walter Scott. Read what he says of them in the first canto of his poem. Loch Katrine, when we reached it, was crisped into little waves, by a fresh wind from the northwest, and a boat, with four brawny Highlanders, was waiting to convey us to the head of the lake. We launched upon the dark deep water, between craggy and shrubby steeps, the summits of which rose on every side of us; and one of the rowers, an intelligent-looking man, took upon himself the task of pointing out to us the places mentioned by the poet. "There," said he, as we receded from the shore, "is the spot in the Trosachs where Fitz James lost his gallant gray." He then repeated, in a sort of recitative, dwelling strongly on the rhyme, the lines in the Lady of the Lake which relate that incident. "Yonder is the island where Douglass concealed his daughter. Under that broad oak, whose 188 boughs almost dip into the water, was the place where her skiff was moored. On that rock, covered with heath, Fitz James stood and wound his bugle. Near it, but out of sight, is the silver strand where the skiff received him on board."

Further on, he pointed out, on the south side of the lake, half way up among the rocks of the mountain, the place of the Goblin Cave, and still beyond it "The wild pass, where birches wave, Of Beal-anam-bo."

On the north shore, the hills had a gentler slope, and on their skirts, which spread into something like a meadow, we saw a solitary dwelling. "In that," said he, "Rob Roy was born." In about two hours, our strong-armed rowers had brought us to the head of the lake. Before we reached it, we saw the dark crest of Ben Lomond, loftier than any of the mountains around us, peering over the hills which formed the southern rampart of Loch Katrine. We landed, and proceeded—the men on foot and the women on ponies—through a wild craggy valley, overgrown with low shrubs, to Inversnaid, on Loch Lomond, where a stream freshly swollen by rains tumbled down a pretty cascade into the lake. As

Library of Congress

we descended the steep bank, we saw a man and woman sitting on the grass weaving baskets; the woman, as we passed, stopped her work to beg; and the children,

LOCK KATRINE. Pertshire.

189 chubby and ruddy, came running after us with "Please give me a penny to buy a scone."

At Iversnaid we embarked in a steamboat which took us to the northern extremity of the lake, where it narrows into a channel like a river. Here we stopped to wait the arrival of a coach, and, in the mean time, the passengers had an hour to wander in the grassy valley of Glenfalloch, closed in by high mountains. I heard the roar of mountain-streams, and passing northward, found myself in sight of two torrents, one from the east, and the other from the west side of the valley, throwing themselves, foaming and white, from precipice to precipice, till their waters, which were gathered in the summit of the mountains, reached the meadows, and stole through the grass to mingle with those of the lake.

The coach at length arrived, and we were again taken on board the steamer, and conveyed the whole length of Loch Lomond to its southern extremity. We passed island after island, one of which showed among its thick trees the remains of a fortress, erected in the days of feudal warfare and robbery, and another was filled with deer. Towards the southern end of the lake, the towering mountains, peak beyond peak, which overlook the lake, subside into hills, between which the stream called Leven-water flows out through a rich and fertile valley.

Coaches were waiting at Balloch, where we landed, to take us to Dumbarton. Near the lake we passed a magnificent park, in the midst of which stood a castle, a veritable 190 castle, a spacious massive building of stone, with a tower and battlements, on which a flag was flying. "It belongs to a dry-goods merchant in Glasgow," said the captain of the steamboat, who was in the coach with us; "and the flag is put up by his boys. The merchants are getting finer seats than the nobility." I am sorry to say that I have forgotten

both the name of the merchant and that of his castle. He was, as I was told, a liberal, as well as an opulent man; had built a school-house in the neighborhood, and being of the Free Church party, was then engaged in building a church.

Near Renton, on the banks of the Leven, I saw a little neighborhood, embosomed in old trees. "There," said our captain, "Smollet was born." A column has been erected to his memory in the town of Renton, which we saw as we passed. The forked rock, on which stands Dumbarton Castle, was now in sight overlooking the Clyde; we were whirled into the town, and in a few minutes were on board a steamer which, as evening set in, landed us at Glasgow.

I must reserve what I have to tell of Glasgow and Ayrshire for yet another letter.

191

LETTER XXIV. GLASGOW.—AYR.—ALLOWAY.

Dubin, *July 24*, 1845.

I promised another letter concerning Scotland, but I had not time to write it until the Irish Channel lay between me and the Scottish coast.

When we reached Glasgow on the 18th of July, the streets were swarming with people. I inquired the occasion, and was told that this was the annual fair. The artizans were all out with their families, and great numbers of country people were sauntering about. This fair was once, what its name imports, an annual market for the sale of merchandise; but it is now a mere holiday in which the principal sales, as it appeared to me, were of gingerbread and whisky. I strolled the next morning to the Green, a spacious open ground that stretches along the Clyde. One part of it was occupied with the booths and temporary theatres and wagons of showmen, around and among which a vast throng was assembled, who seemed to delight in being deafened with the cries of the showmen and the music of their instruments. In one place a band was playing, in another

Library of Congress

a gong was thundering, and from one of 192 the balconies a fellow in regal robes and a pasteboard crown, surrounded by several persons of both sexes in tawdry stage-dresses, who seemed to have just got out of bed and were yawning and rubbing their eyes, was vociferating to the crowd in praise of the entertainment which was shortly to be offered them, while not far off the stentor of a rival company, under a flag which announced a new pantomime for a penny, was declaiming with equal vehemence. I made my way with difficulty through the crowd to the ancient street called the Salt Market, in which Scott places the habitation of Baillie Jarvie. It was obstructed with little stalls, where toys and other inconsiderable articles were sold. Here at the corner of one of the streets stands the old tower of the Tolbooth where Rob Roy was confined, a solid piece of ancient architecture. The main building has been removed and a modern house supplies its place; the tower has been pierced below for a thoroughfare, and its clock still reports the time of day to the people of Glasgow. The crowd through which I passed had that squalid appearance which marks extreme poverty and uncertain means of subsistence, and I was able to form some idea of the prodigious number of this class in a populous city of Great Britain like Glasgow. For populous she is, and prosperous as a city, increasing with a rapidity almost equal to that of New York, and already she numbers, it is estimated, three hundred thousand inhabitants. Of 193 these it is said that full one-third are Irish by birth or born of Irish parents.

The next day, which was Sunday, before going to church, I walked towards the west part of the city; where the streets are broad and the houses extremely well-built, of the same noble material as the new town of Edinburgh; and many of the dwellings have fine gardens. Their sites in many places overlook the pleasant valley of the Clyde, and I could not help acknowledging that Glasgow was not without claim to the epithet of beautiful, which I should have denied her if I had formed my judgment from the commercial streets only. The people of Glasgow also have shown their good sense in erecting the statues which adorn their public squares, only to men who have some just claim to distinction. Here are no statues, for example, of the profligate Charles II., or the worthless Duke of

Library of Congress

York, or the silly Duke of Cambridge, as you will see in other cities; but here the marble effigy of Walter Scott looks from a lofty column in the principal square, and not far from it is that of the inventor Watt; while the statues erected to military men are to those who, like Wellington, have acquired a just renown in arms. The streets were full of well-dressed persons going to church, the women for the most part, I must say, far from beautiful. I turned with the throng and followed it as far as St. Enoch's church, in Buchanan-street, where I heard a long discourse 17 194 from a sensible preacher, Dr. Barr, a minister of the established Kirk of Scotland.

In the afternoon I climbed one of the steep streets to the north of my hotel, and found three places of worship, built with considerable attention to architectural effect, and fresh, as it seemed, from the hands of the mason. They all, as I was told, belonged to the Free Kirk, which has lately been rent from the establishment, and threatens to leave it a mere shadow of a church, like the Episcopal church in Ireland. "Nothing," said an intelligent Glasgow friend of mine, "can exceed the zeal of the friends of the Free Church. One of our Glasgow merchants has just given fifteen hundred pounds towards the fund for providing *manse*s , or parsonages, for the ministers of that Church, and I know of several who have subscribed a thousand. In all the colleges of Scotland, the professors are obliged, by way. of test, to declare their attachment to the Presbyterian Church as by law established. Parliament has just refused to repeal this test, and the friends of the Free Church are determined to found a college of their own. Twenty thousand pounds had already been subscribed before the government refused to dispense with this test, and the project will now be supported with more zeal than ever."

I went into one of these Free churches, and listened to a sermon from Dr. Lindsay, a comfortable-looking professor in some new theological school. It was quite commonplace, though not so long as the Scotch ministers are in the habit 195 of giving; for excessive brevity is by no means their besetting infirmity. At the close of the exercises, he

Library of Congress

announced that a third service would be held in the evening. "The subject," continued he, "will be the thoughts and exercises of Jonah in the whale's belly."

In returning to my hotel, I passed by another new church, with an uncommonly beautiful steeple and elaborate carvings. I inquired its name; it was the new St. John's, and was another of the buildings of the Free Church.

On Monday we made an excursion to the birthplace of Burns. The railway between Glasgow and Ayr took us through Paisley, worthy of note as having produced our eminent ornithologist, Alexander Wilson, and along the banks of Castle Semple Loch, full of swans, a beautiful sheet of water, sleeping among green fields which shelve gently to its edge. We passed by Irvine, where Burns learned the art of dressing flax, and traversing a sandy tract, close to the sea, were set down at Ayr, near the new bridge. You recollect Burns's dialogue between the "auld brig" of Ayr and the new, in which the former predicted that vain as her rival might be of her new and fresh appearance, the time would shortly come when she would be as much dilapidated as herself. The prediction is fulfilled; the bridge has begun to give way, and workmen are busy in repairing its arches.

We followed a pleasant road, sometimes agreeably shaded. by trees, to Alloway. As we went out of Ayr we heard a 196 great hammering and clicking of chisels, and looking to the right we saw workmen busy in building another of the Free Churches, with considerable elaborateness of architecture, in the early Norman style. The day was very fine, the sun bright, and the sky above us perfectly clear; but, as is generally the case in this country with an east wind, the atmosphere was thick with a kind of dry haze which veils distant objects from the sight. The sea was to our right, but we could not discern where it ended and the horizon began, and the mountains of the island of Arran and the lone and lofty rock of Ailsa Craig looked at first like faint shadows in the thick air, and were soon altogether undistinguishable. We came at length to the little old ruinated kirk of Alloway, in the midst of a burying ground, roofless, but with gable-ends still standing, and its interior occupied by tombs. A solid upright marble slab, before the church, marks the place where

Library of Congress

William Burns, the father of the poet, lies buried. A little distance beyond flows the Doon under the old bridge crossed by Tam O'Shanter on the night of his adventure with the witches.

This little stream well deserves the epithet of "bonnie," which Burns has given it. Its clear but dark current, flows rapidly between banks often shaded with ashes, alders, and other trees, and sometimes overhung by precipices of a reddish-colored rock. A little below the bridge it falls into the sea, but the tide comes not up to embitter its waters. From the west bank of the stream the land rises to hills of 197 considerable height, with a heathy summit and wooded slopes, called Brown Carrick Hill. Two high cliffs near it impend over the sea, which are commonly called the Heads of Ayr, and not far from these stands a fragment of an ancient castle. I have sometimes wondered that born as Burns was in the neighborhood of the sea, which I was told is often swelled into prodigious waves by the strong west winds that beat on this coast, he should yet have taken little if any of his poetic imagery from the ocean, either in its wilder or its gentler moods. But his occupations were among the fields, and his thoughts were of those who dwelt among them, and his imagination never wandered where his feelings went not.

The monument erected to Burns, near the bridge, is an ostentatious thing, with a gilt tripod on its summit. I was only interested to see some of the relics of Burns which it contains, among which is the Bible given by him to his Highland Mary. A road from the monument leads along the stream among the trees to a mill, at a little distance above the bridge, where the water passes under steep rocks, and I followed it. The wild rose and the woodbine were in full bloom in the hedges, and these to me were a better memorial of Burns than any thing which the chisel could execute. A barefoot lassie came down the grassy bank among the trees with a pail, and after washing her feet in the swift current filled the pail and bore it again over the bank. 17*

Library of Congress

We saw many visitors sauntering about the bridge or entering the monument; some of them seemed to be country people,—young men with their sisters and sweethearts, and others in white cravats with a certain sleekness of appearance I took to be of the profession of divinity. At the inn beside the Doon, a young woman, with a face and head so round as almost to form a perfect globe, gave us a dish of excellent strawberries and cream, and we set off for the house in which Burns was born.

It is a clay-built cottage of the humblest class, and now serves, with the addition of two new rooms of a better architecture, for an ale-house. Mrs. Hastings, the landlady, showed us the register, in which we remarked that a very great number of the visitors had taken the pains to write themselves down as shoemakers. Major Burns, one of the sons of the poet, had lately visited the place with his two daughters and a younger brother, and they had inscribed their names in the book.

We returned to Ayr by a different road from that by which we went to Alloway. The haymakers were at work in the fields, and the vegetation was everywhere in its highest luxuriance. You may smile at the idea, but I affirm that a potato field in, Great Britain, at this season, is a prettier sight than a vineyard in Italy. In this climate, the plant throws out an abundance of blossoms, pink and white, and just now the potato fields are as fine as so many flower gardens.

THE CENOTAPH OF BURNS AT ALLOWAY. G.F. UTNAM, NEW YORK.

199

We crossed the old bridge of Ayr, which is yet in good preservation, though carriages are not allowed to pass over it. Looking up the stream, we saw solitary slopes and groves on its left bank, and I fancied that I had in my eye the sequestered spot on the banks of the Ayr, where Burns and his Highland Mary held the meeting described in his letters, and parted to meet no more.

200

LETTER XXV. IRELAND.—DUBLIN.

Dublin, *July 25*, 1845.

We left Glasgow on the morning of the 22d, and taking the railway to Ardrossan were soon at the beach. One of those iron steamers which navigate the British waters, far inferior to our own in commodious and comfortable arrangements, but strong and safe, received us on board, and at ten o'clock we were on our way to Belfast. The coast of Ayr, with the cliff near the birthplace of Burns, continued long in sight; we passed near the mountains of Arran, high and bare steeps swelling out of the sea, which had a look of almost complete solitude; and at length Ails Craig began faintly to show itself, high above the horizon, through the thick atmosphere. We passed this lonely rock, about which flocks of sea-birds, the solan goose, and the gannet, on long white wings with jetty tips, were continually wheeling, and with a glass we could discern them sitting by thousands on the shelves of the rock, where they breed. The upper part of Ailsa, above the cliffs, which reach more than half-way to the summit, appears not to be destitute of soil, for it was tinged with a faint verdure.

BELFAST. ANTRIM.

201

In about nine hours—we were promised by a lying advertisement it should be six—we had crossed the channel, over smooth water, and were making our way, between green shores almost without a tree, up the bay, at the bottom of which stands, or rather lies, for its site is low, the town of Belfast. We had yet enough of daylight left to explore a part at least of the city. "It looks like Albany," said my companion, and really the place bears some resemblance to the streets of Albany which are situated near the river, nor is it without an appearance of commercial activity. The people of Belfast, you know, are of Scotch origin, with some infusion of the original race of Ireland. I heard English spoken with a Scotch accent, but I was obliged to own that the severity of the Scottish physiognomy had been

Library of Congress

softened by the migration and the mingling of breeds. I presented one of my letters of introduction, and met with so cordial a reception, that I could not but regret the necessity of leaving Belfast the next morning.

At an early hour the next day we were in our seats on the outside of the mail-coach. We passed through a well-cultivated country, interspersed with towns which had an appearance of activity and thrift. The dwellings of the cottagers looked more comfortable than those of the same class in Scotland, and we were struck with the good looks of the people, men and women, whom we passed in great numbers going to their work. At length, having traversed the county of Down, we entered Lowth, when an immediate change was visible. We were among wretched and dirty hovels, squalid-looking men and women, and ragged children—the stature of the people seemed dwarfed by the poverty in which they have so long lived, and the jet-black hair and broad faces which I saw around me, instead of the light hair and oval countenances so general a few miles back, showed me that I was among the pure Celtic race.

Shortly after entering the county of Lowth, and close on the confines of Armagh, perhaps partly within it, we traversed, near the village of Jonesborough, a valley full of the habitations of peat-diggers. Its aspect was most remarkable, the barren hills that inclose it were dark with heath and gorse and with ledges of brown rock, and their lower declivities, as well as the level of the valley, black with peat, which had been cut from the ground and laid in rows. The men were at work with spades cutting it from the soil, and the women were pressing the water from the portions thus separated, and exposing it to the air to dry. Their dwellings were of the most wretched kind, low windowless hovels, no higher than the heaps of peat, with swarms of dirty children around them. It is the property of peat earth to absorb a large quantity of water, and to part with it slowly. The springs, therefore, in a region abounding with peat make no brooks; the water passes into the spongy soil and remains there, forming morasses even on the slopes of the hills.

Library of Congress

As we passed out of this black valley we entered a kind 203 of glen, and the guard, a man in a laced hat and scarlet coat, pointed to the left, and said, "There is a pretty place." It was a beautiful park along a hill-side, groves and lawns, a broad domain, jealously inclosed by a thick and high wall, beyond which we had, through the trees, a glimpse of a stately mansion. Our guard was a genuine Irishman, strongly resembling the late actor Power in physiognomy, with the very brogue which Power sometimes gave to his personages. He was a man of pithy speech, communicative, and acquainted apparently with every body, of every class, whom we passed on the road. Besides him we had for fellow-passengers three very intelligent Irishmen, on their way to Dublin. One of them was a tall, handsome gentleman, with dark hair and hazel eyes, and a rich South-Irish brogue. He was fond of his joke, but next to him sat a graver personage, in spectacles, equally tall, with fair hair and light-blue eyes, speaking with a decided Scotch accent. By my side was a square-built, fresh-colored personage, who had travelled in America, and whose accent was almost English. I thought I could not be mistaken in supposing them to be samples of the three different races by which Ireland is peopled.

We now entered a fertile district, meadows heavy with grass, in which the haymakers were at work, and fields of wheat and barley as fine as I had ever seen, but the habitations of the peasantry had the same wretched look, and their inmates the same appearance of poverty. Wherever 204 the coach stopped we were beset with swarms of beggars, the wittiest beggars in the world, and the raggedest, except those of Italy. One or two green mounds stood close to the road, and we saw others at a distance. "They are Danish forts," said the guard. "Every thing we do not know the history of, we put upon the Danes," added the South of Ireland man. These grassy mounds, which are from ten to twenty feet in height, are now supposed to have been the burial places of the ancient Celts. The peasantry can with difficulty be persuaded to open any of them, on account of a prevalent superstition that it will bring bad luck. A little before we arrived at Drogheda, I saw a tower to the right, apparently a hundred feet in height, with a doorway at a great distance from the ground, and a summit somewhat dilapidated. "That is one of the round towers of

Library of Congress

Ireland, concerning which there is so much discussion,” said my English-looking fellow-traveller. These round towers, as the Dublin antiquarians tell me, were probably built by the early Christian missionaries from Italy, about the seventh century, and were used as places of retreat and defence against the pagans.

Not far from Drogheda, I saw at a distance a quiet-looking valley. “That,” said the English-looking passenger, “is the valley of the Boyne, and in that spot was fought the famous battle of the Boyne.” “Which the Irish are fighting about yet, in America,” added the South of Ireland man. They pointed out near the spot, a cluster of 205 trees on an eminence, where James beheld the defeat of his followers. We crossed the Boyne, entered Drogheda, dismounted among a crowd of beggars, took our places in the most elegant railway waggon we had ever seen, and in an hour were set down in Dublin.

I will not weary you with a description of Dublin. Scores of travellers have said that its public buildings are magnificent, and its rows of private houses, in many of the streets, are so many ranges of palaces, Scores of travellers have said that if you pass out of these fine streets, into the ancient lanes of the city, you see mud-houses that scarcely afford a shelter, and are yet inhabited.

“Some of these,” said a Dublin acquaintance to me, “which are now roofless and no longer keep out the weather, yet show by their elaborate cornices and their elegant chimney-pieces, that the time has been, and that not very long since, when they were inhabited by the opulent class.” He led me back of Dublin castle to show me the house in which Swift was born. It stands in a narrow, dirty lane called Holy's court, close to the well-built part of the town: its windows are broken out, and its shutters falling to pieces, and the houses on each side are in the same condition, yet they are swarming with dirty and ragged inmates.

I have seen no loftier nor more spacious dwellings than those which overlook St. Stephen's Green, a noble park, planted with trees, under which this showery sky and mild 18 206 temperature maintain a verdure all the year, even in mid-winter. About Merrion

Library of Congress

square, another park, the houses have scarcely a less stately appearance, and one of these with a strong broad balcony, from which to address the people in the street, is inhabited by O'Connell. The park of the University, in the midst of the city, is of great extent, and the beautiful public grounds called Phenix Park, have a circumference of eight miles. "Do not suppose," said a friend to me, "that these spacious houses which you see about you, are always furnished with a magnificence corresponding to that of their exterior. It is often the case that a few rooms only of these great ranges of apartments are provided with furniture, and the rest left empty and unoccupied. The Irishman of the higher class, as well as of the humbler, is naturally improvident, generous, fond of enjoying the moment, and does not allow his income to accumulate, either for the purpose of hoarding or the purpose of display."

I went into Conciliation Hall, which resembles a New York lecture-room, and was shown the chair where the autocrat of Ireland, the Liberator, as they call him, sits near the chairman at the repeal meetings. Conciliation Hall was at that time silent, for O'Connell was making a journey through several of the western counties, I think, of Ireland, for the purpose of addressing and encouraging his followers. I inquired of an intelligent dissenter what was the state of the public feeling in Ireland, with regard to the repeal question,

CUSTOM HOUSE. DUBLIN.

207 and whether the popularity of O'Connell was still as great as ever.

"As to O'Connell," he answered, "I do not know whether his influence is increasing, but I am certain that it is not declining. With regard to the question of repealing the Union, there is a very strong leaning among intelligent men in Ireland to the scheme of a federal government, in other words, to the creation of an Irish parliament for local legislation, leaving matters which concern Ireland in common with the rest of the empire to be decided by the British Parliament."

Library of Congress

I mentioned an extraordinary declaration which I had heard made by John O'Connell on the floor of Parliament, in answer to a speech of Mr. Wyse, an Irish Catholic member, who supported the new-colleges bill. This younger O'Connell denounced Wyse as no Catholic, as an apostate from his religion, for supporting the bill, and declared that for himself, after the Catholic Bishops of Ireland had expressed their disapproval of the bill, he inquired no further, but felt himself bound as a faithful member of the Catholic Church to oppose it.

"It is that declaration," said the gentleman, "which has caused a panic among those of the Irish Protestants who were well-affected to the cause of repeal. If the Union should be repealed, they fear that O'Connell, whose devotion to the Catholic Church appears to grow stronger and stronger, and whose influence over the Catholic population 208 is almost without limit, will so direct the legislation of the Irish Parliament as only to change the religious oppression that exists from one party to the other. There is much greater liberality at present among the Catholics than among their adversaries in Ireland, but I can not say how much of it is owing to the oppression they endure. The fact that O'Connell has been backward to assist in any church reforms in Ireland has given occasion to the suspicion that he only desires to see the revenues and the legal authority of the Episcopal Church transferred to the Catholic Church. If that should happen, and if the principle avowed by John O'Connell should be the rule of legislation, scarcely any body but a Catholic will be able to live in Ireland."

Mr. Wall, to whom our country is indebted for the Hudson River Portfolio, and who resided in the United States for twenty-two years, is here, and is, I should think, quite successful in his profession. Some of his later landscapes are superior to any of his productions that I remember. Among them is a view on Lough Corrib, in which the ruined castle on the island of that lake is a conspicuous object. It is an oil painting, and is a work of great merit. The Dublin Art Union made it their first purchase from the exhibition in which it appeared. Mr. Wall remembers America with much pleasure, and nothing can exceed his kindness to such of the Americans as he meets in Ireland.

He took us to the exhibition of the Royal Hibernian Society. Among its pictures is a portrait of a lady by Burton, 209 in water-colors, most surprising for its perfection of execution and expression, its strength of coloring and absolute nature. Burton is a native of Dublin, and is but twenty-five years old. The Irish connoisseurs claim for him the praise of being the first artist in water-colors in the world. He paints with the left hand. There are several other fine things by him in the exhibition. Maclise, another Irish artist, has a picture in the exhibition, representing a dramatic author offering his piece to an actor. The story is told in *Gil Blas*. It is a miracle of execution, though it has the fault of hardness and too equal a distribution of light. I have no time to speak more at large of this exhibition, and my letter is already too long.

This afternoon we sail for Liverpool. 18*

210

LETTER XXVI. THE LUNATIC ASYLUM AT HANWELL.

London, *July 28*, 1845.

Since we came to England we have visited the Lunatic Asylum at Hanwell, in the neighborhood of London. It is a large building, divided into numerous apartments, with the plainest accommodations, for the insane poor of the county of Middlesex. It is superintended by Dr. Conolly, who is most admirably fitted for the place he fills, by his great humanity, sagacity, and ingenuity.

I put these qualities together as necessary to each other. Mere humanity, without tact and skill, would fail deplorably. The rude and coarse methods of government which consist in severity, are the most obvious ones; they suggest themselves to the dullest minds, and cost nothing but bodily strength to put them in execution; the gentler methods require reflection, knowledge, and dexterity. It is these which Dr. Conolly applies with perfect success. He has taken great pains to make himself acquainted, by personal observation,

Library of Congress

with the treatment of the insane in different hospitals, not only in England, but on the continent. He found that to be the most efficacious which 211 interferes least with their personal liberty, and on this principle, the truth of which an experience of several years has now confirmed, he founded the system of treatment at Hanwell.

We had letters to Dr. Conolly, with the kindness and gentleness of whose manners we were much struck. He conducted us over the several wards of the Asylum. We found in it a thousand persons of both sexes, not one of whom was in seclusion, that is to say confined because it was dangerous to allow him to go at large; nor were they subjected to any apparent restraint whatever. Some were engaged in reading, some in exercises and games of skill; of the females some were occupied in sewing, others at work in the kitchen or the laundry; melancholic patients were walking about in silence or sitting gloomily by themselves; idiots were rocking their bodies backward and forward as they sat, but; all were peaceable in their demeanor, and the greatest quiet prevailed. No chastisement of any kind is inflicted; the lunatic is always treated as a patient, and never as an offender. When he becomes so outrageous and violent that his presence can be endured no longer, he is put into a room with padded walls and floors where he can do himself no mischief, and where his rage is allowed to exhale. Even the straight jacket is unknown here.

I said that the demeanor of all the patients with whom the Asylum was swarming was peaceable. There was one exception. On entering one of the wards, a girl of an 212 earnest and determined aspect, as soon as she saw Dr. Conolly began to scream violently, and sprang towards him, thrusting aside the bystanders by main force. Two of the female attendants came immediately up and strove to appease her, holding her back without severity, as a mother would restrain her infant. I saw them struggling with her for some time; how they finally disposed of her I did not observe, but her screams had ceased before we. left the ward.

Among the patients was one who, we were told, was remarkable for his extravagant love of finery, and whose cell was plastered over with glaring colored prints and patches of

Library of Congress

colored paper ornamentally disposed. He wore on his hat a broad strip of tarnished lace, and had decorated his waistcoat with several perpendicular rows of pearl buttons.

“You have made your room very fine here,” said the doctor.

“Yes,” said he, smiling and evidently delighted, “but, my dear sir, all is vanity—all is vanity, sir, and vexation of spirit. There is but one thing that we ought to strive for, and that is the kingdom of heaven.”

As there was no disputing this proposition, we passed on to another cell, at the door of which stood a tall, erect personage, who was busy with a pot of paint and a brush, inscribing the pannels with mottoes and scraps of verse. The walls of his room were covered with poetry and pithy sentences. Some of the latter appeared to be of his own composition, and were not badly turned; their purport generally was this: that birth is but a trivial accident, and that virtue and talent are the only true nobility. This man was found wandering about in Chiswick, full of a plan for educating the Prince of Wales in a manner to enable him to fill the throne with credit and usefulness. As his name could not be learned, the appellation of “Chiswick” was given him, which he had himself adopted, styling himself Mr. “Chiswick” in his mottoes, but always taking care to put the name between inverted commas.

As we proceeded, a man rose from his seat, and laying both hands on a table before him, so as to display his fingers, ornamented with rings made of black ribbon, in which glass buttons were set for jewels, addressed Dr. Conolly with great respect, formally setting forth that he was in great want of a new coat for Sundays, the one he had on being positively unfit to appear in, and that a better had been promised him. The doctor stopped, inquired into the case, and the poor fellow was gratified by the assurance that the promised coat should be speedily forthcoming.

In his progress through the wards Dr. Conolly listened with great patience to the various complaints of the inmates. One of them came up and told us that he did not think the

Library of Congress

methods of the institution judicious. "The patients," said he, "are many of them growing worse. One in particular, who has been here for several weeks, I can see is growing worse every day." Dr. Conolly asked 214 the name of this patient—"I can not tell," said the man, "but I can bring him to you." "Bring him then," said the doctor; and after a moment's absence he returned, leading up one of the healthiest and quietest looking men in the ward. "He looks better to be sure," said the man, "but he is really worse." A burst of laughter from the patients who stood by followed this saying, and one of them looking at me knowingly, touched his forehead to intimate that the objector was not exactly in his senses.

In one of the female wards we were introduced, as gentlemen from America, to a respectable-looking old lady in black, who sat with a crutch by her side. "Are you not lawyers?" she asked, and when we assured her that we were only Yankees, she rebuked us mildly for assuming such a disguise, when she knew very well that we were a couple of attorneys. "And you, doctor," she added, "I am surprised that you should have any thing to do with such a deception." The doctor answered that he was very sorry she had so bad an opinion of him, as she must be sensible that he had never said any thing to her which was not true. "Ah, doctor," she rejoined, "but you are the dupe of these people."

It was in the same ward, I think, that a well-dressed woman, in a bonnet and shawl, was promenading the room, carrying a bible and two smaller volumes, apparently prayer or hymn books. "Have you heard the very reverend Mr.—, in—chapel?" she asked of my fellow-traveller 215 I have unfortunately forgotten the name of the preacher and his chapel. On being answered in the negative, "Then go and hear him," she added, "when you return to London." She went on to say that the second coming of the Saviour was to take place, and the world to be destroyed in a very few days, and that she had a commission to proclaim the approach of that event. "These poor people," said she, "think that I am here on the same account as themselves, when I am only here to prepare the way for the second coming."

Library of Congress

"I'm thinking, please yer honor, that it is quite time I was let out of this place," said a voice as we entered one of the wards. Dr. Conolly told me that he had several Irish patients in the asylum, and that they gave him the most trouble on account of the hurry in which they were to be discharged. We heard the same request eagerly made in the same brogue by various other patients of both sexes.

As I left this multitude of lunatics, promiscuously gathered from the poor and the reduced class, comprising all varieties of mental disease, from idiocy to madness, yet all of them held in such admirable order by the law of kindness, that to the casual observer most of them betrayed no symptoms of insanity, and of the rest, many appeared to be only very odd people, quietly pursuing their own harmless whims, I could not but feel the highest veneration for the enlightened humanity by which the establishment was directed. I considered, also, if the feeling of personal liberty, the absence of physical restraint, and the power of moral motives, had such power to hold together in perfect peace and order, even a promiscuous band of lunatics, how much greater must be their influence over the minds of men in a state of sanity, and on how false a foundation rest all the governments of force! The true basis of human polity, appointed by God in our nature, is the power of moral motives, which is but another term for public opinion.

Of the political controversies which at present agitate the country, the corn-law question is that which calls forth the most feeling; I mean on the part of those who oppose the restrictions on the introduction of foreign grain—for, on the other side, it appears to me that the battle is languidly fought. Nothing can exceed the enthusiasm of the adversaries of the corn-laws. With some of them the repeal of the tax on bread is the remedy for all political evils. "Free trade, free trade," is the burden of their conversation, and although a friend of free trade myself, to the last and uttermost limit, I have been in circles in England, in which I had a little too much of it. Yet this is an example to prove what a strong hold the question has taken of the minds of men, and how completely the thoughts of many are absorbed by it. Against such a feeling as that which has been kindled in Great Britain, on the corn-law

Library of Congress

question, no law in our country could stand. So far as I can judge, it is spreading, as well as growing stronger. I am told that many of the farmers have become proselytes of the League. 217 The League is a powerful and prodigiously numerous association, with ample and increasing funds, publishing able tracts, supporting well-conducted journals, and holding crowded public meetings, which are addressed by some of the ablest speakers in the United Kingdom. I attended one of these at Covent Garden. Stage, pit, boxes, and gallery of that large building were filled with one of the most respectable-looking audiences, men and women, I have ever seen. Among the speakers of the evening were Cobden and Fox. Cobden in physiognomy and appearance might almost pass for an American, and has a certain New England sharpness and shrewdness in his way of dealing with a subject. His address was argumentative, yet there was a certain popular clearness about it, a fertility of familiar illustration, and an earnest feeling, which made it uncommonly impressive. Fox is one of the most fluent and ingenious speakers I ever heard in a popular assembly. Both were listened to by an audience which seemed to hang on every word that fell from their lips.

The musical world here are talking about Colman's improvement in the piano. I have seen the instrument which the inventor brought out from America. It is furnished with a row of brass reeds, like those of the instrument called the Seraphine. These take up the sound made by the string of the piano, and prolong it to any degree which is desired. It is a splicing of the sounds of one instrument upon another. Yet if the invention were to be left where 19 218 it is, in Colman's instrument, it could not succeed with the public. The notes of the reeds are too harsh and nasal, and want the sweetness and mellowness of tone which belong to the string of the piano.

At present the invention is in the hands of Mr. Rand, the portrait painter, a countryman of ours, who is one of the most ingenious mechanics in the world. He has improved the tones of the reeds till they rival, in softness and fulness, those of the strings, and, in fact, can hardly be distinguished from them, so that the sounds of the two instruments run into one another without any apparent difference. Mr. Rand has contrived three or four different

machines for making the reeds with dispatch and precision; and if the difficulty of keeping the strings, which are undergoing a constant relaxation, in perfect unison with the reeds, can be overcome, I see nothing to prevent the most complete and brilliant success.

219

LETTER XXVII. CHANGES IN PARIS.

Paris, *August 9*, 1845.

My last letter was dated at London, in my passage across England. I have been nearly a fortnight in Paris. In ten years I find a considerable change in the external aspect of this great capital. The streets are cleaner, in many of them sidewalks have been made, not always the widest to be sure, but smoothly floored with the asphaltum of Seyssel, which answers the purpose admirably; the gutters have been removed from the middle of the street to the edge of the curbstone, and lately the curbstone has been made to project over them, so that the foot-passengers may escape the bespattering from carriage-wheels which he would otherwise be sure to get in a rainy day, and there are many such days in this climate—it has rained every day but one since I entered France.

New passages have been cut from street to street, old streets have been made wider, new streets have been made, with broad sidewalks, and stately rows of houses hewn from the easily wrought cream-colored stone of the quarries of the Seine. The sidewalks of the Boulevards, and all the 220 public squares, wherever carriages do not pass, have been covered with this smooth asphaltic pavement, and in the Boulevards have been erected some magnificent buildings, with richly carved pilasters and other ornaments in relief, and statues in niches, and balconies supported by stone brackets wrought into bunches of foliage. New columns and statues have been set up, and new fountains pour out their waters. Among these is the fountain of Moliere, in the Rue Richelieu, where the effigy of the comic author, chiseled from black marble, with flowing periwig and broadskirted coat,

Library of Congress

presides over a group of naked allegorical figures in white marble, at whose feet the water is gushing out.

In external morality also, there is some improvement; public gaming-houses no longer exist, and there are fewer of those uncleanly nuisances which offend against the code of what Addison calls the lesser morals. The police have had orders to suppress them on the Boulevards and the public squares. The Parisians are, however, the same gay people as ever, and as easily amused as when I saw them last. They crowd in as great numbers to the opera and the theatres; the Boulevards, though better paved, are the same lively places; the guingettes are as thronged; the public gardens are as full of dancers. In these, as at the New Tivoli, lately opened at Chateau Rouge in the suburbs, a broad space made smooth for the purpose is left between tents, where the young grisettes of Paris, married Boulevards.

221 and unmarried, or in that equivocal state which lies somewhere between, dance on Sunday evening till midnight.

At an earlier hour on the same day, as well as on other days, at old Franconi's Hippodrome, among the trees, just beyond the triumphal arch of Neuilly, imitations of the steeple chase, with female riders who leap over hedges, and of the ancient chariot-races with charioteers helmeted and mailed, and standing in gilt tubs on wheels, are performed in a vast amphitheatre, to a crowd that could scarcely have been contained in the Colosseum of Rome.

I have heard since I came here, two or three people lamenting the physical degeneracy Of the Parisians. One of them quoted a saying from a report of Marshal Soult, that the Parisian recruits for the army of late years were neither men nor soldiers. This seems to imply a moral as well as a physical deterioration. "They are growing smaller and smaller in stature," said the gentleman who made this quotation, "and it is difficult to find among them men who are of the proper height to serve as soldiers. The principal cause no doubt

Library of Congress

is in the prevailing licentiousness. Among that class who make the greater part of the population of Paris, the women of the finest persons rarely become mothers." Whatever may be the cause, I witnessed a remarkable example of the smallness of the Parisian stature on the day of my arrival, which was the last of the three days kept in memory of the revolution of July. I went immediately to the Champs Elysées to see 19* 222 the people engaged in their amusements. Some twenty boys, not fully grown, as it seemed to me at first, were dancing and capering with great agility, to the music of an instrument. Looking at them nearer, I saw that those who had seemed to me boys of fourteen or fifteen, were mature young men, some of them with very fierce mustaches.

Since my arrival I have seen the picture which Vanderlyn is painting for the Rotunda at Washington. It represents the Landing of Columbus on the shores of the New World. The great discoverer, accompanied by his lieutenant and others, is represented as taking possession of the newly found country. Some of the crew are seen scrambling for what they imagine to be gold dust in the sands of the shore, and at a little distance among the trees are the naked natives, in attitudes of wonder and worship. The grouping is happy, the expression and action skillfully varied—the coloring, so far as I could judge in the present state of the picture, agreeable. "Eight or ten weeks hard work," said the artist, "will complete it." It is Vanderlyn's intention to finish it, and take it to the United States in the course of the autumn.

223

LETTER XXVIII. A JOURNEY THROUGH THE NETHERLANDS.

Arnheim, Guelderland, *August* 19, 1848.

After writing my last I was early asleep, that I might set out early the next morning in the diligence for Brussels. This I did, and passing through Compeigne, where Joan of Arc was made prisoner—a town lying in the midst of extensive forests, with here and there a noble group of trees; and through Noyon, where Calvin was born, and in the old Gothic church of

Library of Congress

which he doubtless worshipped; and through Cambray, where Fenelon lived; and through fields of grain and poppy and clover, where women were at work, reaping the wheat, or mowing and stacking the ripe poppies, or digging with spades in their wet clothes, for it had rained every day but one during the thirteen we were in France, we arrived in the afternoon of the second day at the French frontier. From this a railway took us in a few hours to Brussels. Imagine a rather clean-looking city, of large light-colored buildings mostly covered with stucco, situated on an irregular declivity, with a shady park in the highest part surrounded by palaces, and a little lower down a fine old Gothic cathedral, and still lower down, the old 224 Town Hall, also of Gothic architecture, and scarcely less venerable, standing in a noble paved square, around which are white and stately edifices, built in the era of the Spanish dominion;—imagine handsome shops and a good-looking people, with a liberal sprinkling of priests, in their long-skirted garments, and throw in the usual proportion of dirt and misery, and mendicancy, in the corners and byplaces, and you have Brussels before you.

It still rained, but we got a tilbury and drove out to see the battle-ground of Waterloo. It was a dreary drive beside the wood of Soignes and through a part of it,—that melancholy-looking forest of tall-stemmed beeches—beech, nothing but beech—and through the Walloon villages—Waterloo is one of them—and through fields where wet women were at work, and over roads where dirty children by dozens were dabbling like ducks in the puddles. At last we stopped at the village of Mont St. Jean, whence we walked through the slippery mud to the mound erected in the midst of the battle-field, and climbed to its top, over-looking a country of gentle declivities and hollows. Here the various positions of the French and allied armies during the battle which decided the fate of an empire, were pointed out to us by a young Walloon who sold wine and drams in a shed beside the monument. The two races which make up the population of Belgium are still remarkably distinct, notwithstanding the centuries which have elapsed since they occupied the same country together. The Flemings, 225 of Teutonic origin, keep their blue eyes and fair hair, and their ancient language—the same nearly as the Dutch of the sixteenth century. The

Library of Congress

Walloons, a Celtic race, or Celtic mixed with Roman, are still known by their dark hair and black eyes, and speak a dialect derived from the Latin, resembling that of some of the French provinces. Both languages are uncultivated, and the French has been adopted as the language of commerce and literature in Belgium.

If you would see a city wholly Flemish in its character, you should visit Antwerp, to which the railway takes you in an hour and a half. The population here is almost without Walloon intermixture, and there is little to remind you of what you have seen in France, except the French books in the booksellers' windows. The arts themselves have a character of their own which never came across the Alps. The churches, the interior of which is always carefully kept fresh with paint and gilding, are crowded with statues in wood, carved with wonderful skill and spirit by Flemish artists, in centuries gone by—oaken saints looking down from pedestals, and Adam and Eve in the remorse of their first transgression supporting, by the help of the tree of knowledge and the serpent, a curiously wrought pulpit. The walls are hung with pictures by the Flemish masters, wherever space can be found for them. In the Cathedral, is the Descent from the Cross, by Rubens, which proves, what one might almost doubt who had only 226 seen his pictures in the Louvre, that he was a true artist and a man of genius in the noblest sense of the term.

We passed two nights in Antwerp, and then went down the Scheldt in a steamer, which, in ten hours, brought us to Rotterdam, sometimes crossing an arm of the sea, and sometimes threading a broad canal. The houses on each side of these channels, after we entered Holland, were for the most part freshly painted; the flat plains on each side protected by embankments, and streaked by long wide ditches full of water, and rows of pollard willows. Windmills by scores, some grinding corn, but most of them pumping water out of the meadows and pouring it into the channel, stood on the bank and were swinging their long arms madly in a high wind.

On arriving at Rotterdam, you perceive at once that you are in Holland. The city has as many canals as streets, the canals are generally overhung with rows of elms, and the

Library of Congress

streets kept scrupulously clean with the water of the canals, which is salt. Every morning there is a vigorous splashing and mopping performed before every door by plump servant girls, in white caps and thick wooden shoes. Our hotel stood fronting a broad sheet of water like the lagoons at Venice, where a solid and straight stone wharf was shaded with a row of elms, and before our door lay several huge vessels fastened to the wharf, which looked as if they were sent thither to enjoy a vacation, for they were neither loading nor unloading, nor did any person appear to 227 be busy about them. Rotterdam was at that time in the midst of a fair which filled the open squares and the wider streets of the city with booths, and attracted crowds of people from the country. There were damsels from North Holland, fair as snow, and some of them pretty, in long-eared lace caps, with their plump arms bare; and there were maidens from another province, the name of which I did not learn, equally good-looking, with arms as bare, and faces in white muslin caps drawn to a point on each cheek. Olycoeks were frying, and waffles baking in temporary kitchens on each side of the streets.

The country about Rotterdam is little better than a marsh. The soil serves only for pasture, and the fields are still covered with "yellow blossoms," as in the time of Goldsmith, and still tufted with willows. I saw houses in the city standing in pools of dull blue water, reached by a bridge from the street: I suppose, however, there might be gardens behind them. Many of the houses decline very much from the perpendicular; they are, however, apparently well-built and are spacious. We made no long stay in Rotterdam, but after looking at its bronze statue of Erasmus, and its cathedral, which is not remarkable in any other respect than that it is a Gothic building of brick, stone being scarce in Holland, we took the stage-coach for the Hague the next day.

Green meadows spotted with buttercups and dandelions, flat and low, lower than the canals with which the country 228 is intersected, and which bring in between them, at high tide, the waters of the distant sea, stretched on every side. They were striped with long lines of water which is constantly pumped out by the windmills, and sent with the ebb tide through the canals to the ocean. Herds of cattle were feeding among the bright

Library of Congress

verdure. From time to time, we passed some pleasant country-seat, the walls bright with paint, and the grounds surrounded by a ditch, call it a moat if you please, the surface of which was green with duck-weed. But within this watery inclosure, were little artificial elevations covered with a closely-shaven turf, and plantations of shrubbery, and in the more extensive and ostentatious of them, were what might be called groves and forests. Before one of these houses was a fountain with figures, mouths of lions and other animals, gushing profusely with water, which must have been pumped up for the purpose, into a reservoir, by one of the windmills.

Passing through Schiedam, still famous for its gin, and Delft, once famous for its crockery, we reached in a couple of hours the Hague, the cleanest of cities, paved with yellow brick, and as full of canals as Rotterdam. I called on an old acquaintance, who received me with a warm embrace and a kiss on each cheek. He was in his morning-gown, which he immediately exchanged for an elegant frock coat of the latest Parisian cut, and took us to see Baron Vorstolk's collection of pictures, which contains some beautiful things by the Flemish artists, and next, to the public collection called the Museum. From this we drove to the Chateau du Bois, a residence of the Dutch Stadtholders two hundred years ago, when Holland was a republic, and a powerful and formidable one. It is pleasantly situated in the edge of a wood, which is said to be part of an original forest of the country. I could believe this, for here the soil rises above the marshy level, of Holland, and trees of various kinds grow irregularly intermingled, as in the natural woods of our own country. The Chateau du Bois is principally remarkable for a large room with a dome, the interior of which is covered with: large paintings by Rubens, Jordaens, and other artists.

Our friend took leave of us, and we drove out to Scheveling, where Charles II. embarked for England, when he returned to take possession of his throne. Here dwell a people who supply the fish-market of the Hague, speak among themselves a dialect which is not understood elsewhere in Holland, and wear the same costume which they wore centuries ago. We passed several of the women going to market or returning, with large baskets on their heads, placed on the crown of a broad-brimmed straw bonnet, tied at the sides

Library of Congress

under the chin, and strapping creatures they were, striding along in their striped black and white petticoats. In the streets of Scheveling, I saw the tallest woman I think I ever met with, a very giantess, considerably more than six feet high, straddling about the street of the little village, and scouring and scrubbing the pavement 20 230 with great energy. Close at hand was the shore; a strong west wind was driving the surges of the North Sea against it. A hundred fishing vessels rocking in the surf, moored and lashed together with ropes, formed a line along the beach; the men of Scheveling, in knit woollen caps, short blue jackets, and short trowsers of prodigious width, were walking about on the shore, but the wind was too high and the sea too wild for them to venture out. Along this coast, the North Sea has heaped a high range of sand-hills, which protect the low lands within from its own inundations; but to the north and south the shore is guarded by embankments, raised by the hand of man with great cost, and watched and kept in constant repair.

We left the Hague, and taking the railway, in a little more than two hours were at Amsterdam, a great commercial city in decay, where nearly half of the inhabitants live on the charity of the rest. The next morning was Sunday, and taking advantage of an interval of fair weather, for it still continued to rain every day, I went to the Oudekerk, or Old Church, as the ancient Cathedral is called, which might have been an impressive building in its original construction, but is now spoiled by cross-beams, paint, galleries, partitions, pews, and every sort of architectural enormity. But there is a noble organ, with a massive and lofty front of white marble richly sculptured, occupying the west end of the chancel. I listened to a sermon in Dutch, the delivery of which, owing partly to the disagreeable voice of 231 the speaker and partly no doubt to my ignorance of the language, seemed to me a kind of barking. The men all wore their hats during the service, but half the women were without bonnets. When the sermon and prayer were over, the rich tones of the organ broke forth and flooded the place with melody.

Every body visits Brock, near Amsterdam, the pride of Dutch villages, and to Brook I went accordingly. It stands like the rest, among dykes and canals, but consists altogether of the habitations of persons in comfortable circumstances, and is remarkable, as you know, for

Library of Congress

its scrupulous cleanliness. The common streets and footways, are kept in the same order as the private garden-walks. They are paved with yellow bricks, and as a fair was to open in the place that afternoon, the most public parts of them were sanded for the occasion, but elsewhere, they appeared as if just washed and mopped. I have never seen any collection of human habitations so free from any thing offensive to the senses. Saardam, where Peter the Great began his apprenticeship as a shipwright, is among the sights of Holland, and we went the next day to look at it. This also is situated on a dyke, and is an extremely neat little village, but has not the same appearance of opulence in the dwellings. We were shown the chamber in which the Emperor of Russia lodged, and the hole in the wall where he slept, for in the old Dutch houses, as in the modern ones of the farmers, the bed is a sort of high closet, or, more properly speaking, a shelf within the wall, from which a door opens into the room. I should have mentioned that, in going to Broek, I stopped to look at one of the farm-houses of the country, and at Saardam I visited another. They were dairy houses, in which the milk of large herds is made into butter. The lower story of the dwelling, paved with bricks, is used in winter as a stable for the cattle; in the summer, it is carefully cleansed and painted, so that not a trace of its former use remains, and it then becomes both the dairy and the abode of the family. The story above is as neat as the hands of Dutch housewives can make it; the parlor, the dining-room, the little boxes in the wall which hold the beds, are resplendent with cleanliness.

In going from Amsterdam by railway to Utrecht, we perceived the canals by which the plains were intersected became fewer and fewer, and finally we began to see crops of grain and potatoes, a sign that we had emerged from the marshes. We stopped to take a brief survey of Utrecht. A part of its old cathedral has been converted into a beautiful Gothic church, the rest having been levelled many years ago by a whirlwind. But what I found most remarkable in the city was its public walks. The old walls by which Utrecht was once inclosed having been thrown down, the rubbish has formed hillocks and slopes which almost surround the entire city and border one of its principal canals. On these hillocks and slopes, trees and shrubs have been planted, and walks laid out through the green

turf, until it 233 has become one of the most varied and charming pleasure-grounds I ever saw—swelling into little eminences, sinking into little valleys, descending in some places smoothly to the water, and in others impending over it. We fell in with a music-master, of whom we asked a question or two. He happened to know a little German, by the help of which he pieced out his Dutch so as to make it tolerably intelligible to me. He insisted upon showing us every thing remarkable in Utrecht, and finally walked us tired.

The same evening the diligence brought us to Arnheim, a neat-looking town with about eighteen hundred inhabitants, in the province of Guelderland, where the region retains not a trace of the peculiarities of Holland. The country west of the town rises into commanding eminences, overlooking the noble Rhine, and I feel already that I am in Germany, though I have yet to cross the frontier. 20*

234

LETTER XXIX. AMERICAN ARTISTS ABROAD.

Rome, *October*, 1845.

You would perhaps like to hear what the American artists on the continent are doing. I met with Leutze at Düsseldorf. After a sojourn of some days in Holland, in which I was obliged to talk to the Dutchmen in German and get my answers in Dutch, with but a dim apprehension of each other's meaning, as you may suppose, on both sides; after being smoked through and through like a herring, with the fumes of bad tobacco in the railway wagons, and in the diligence which took us over the long and monotonous road on the plains of the Rhine between Arnheim and Düsseldorf—after dodging as well as we were able, the English travellers, generally the most disagreeable of the travelling tribe, who swarm along the Rhine in the summer season, it was a refreshment to stop a day at Düsseldorf and take breath, and meet an American face or two. We found Leutze engaged upon a picture, the subject of which is John Knox reproving Queen Mary. It promises to be a capital work. The stern gravity of Knox, the embarrassment of the Queen, and the scorn

Library of Congress

with which 235 the French damsels of her court regard the saucy Reformer, are extremely well expressed, and tell the story impressively.

At Düsseldorf, which is the residence of so many eminent painters, we expected to find some collection, or at least some of the best specimens, of the works of the modern German school. It was not so, however—fine pictures are painted at Düsseldorf, but they are immediately carried elsewhere. We visited the studio of Schröter—a man with humor in every line of his face, who had nothing to show us but a sketch, just prepared for the easel, of the scene in Goëthe's Faust, where Mephistophiles, in Auerbach's cellar, bores the edge of the table with a gimlet, and a stream of champagne gushes out. Köhler, an eminent artist, allowed us to see a clever painting on his easel, in a state of considerable forwardness, representing the rejoicings of the Hebrew maidens at the victory of David over Goliath. At Lessing's—a painter whose name stands in the first rank, and whom we did not find at home—we saw a sketch on which he was engaged, representing the burning of John Huss; yet it was but a sketch, a painting in embryo.

But I am wandering from the American artists. At Cologne, whither we were accompanied by Leutze, he procured us the sight of his picture of Columbus before the Council of Salamanca, one of his best. Leutze ranks high in Germany, as a young man of promise, devoting himself with great energy and earnestness to his art.

At Florence we found Greenough just returned from a 236 year's residence at Graefenberg, whence he had brought back his wife, a patient of Priessnitz and the water cure, in florid health. He is now applying himself to the completion the group which he has engaged to execute for the capitol at Washington. It represents an American settler, an athletic man, in a hunting shirt and cap, a graceful garb, by the way, rescuing a female and her infant from a savage who has just raised his tomahawk to murder them Part of the group, the hunter and the Indian, is already in marble, and certainly the effect is wonderfully fine and noble. The hunter has approached his enemy unexpectedly from behind, and grasped both his arms, holding them back, in such a manner that he has no

Library of Congress

command of their muscles, even for the purpose of freeing himself. Besides the particular incident represented by the group, it may pass for an image of the aboriginal race of America overpowered and rendered helpless by the civilized race. Greenough's statue of Washington is not as popular as it deserves to be; but the work on which he is now engaged I am very sure will meet with a different reception.

In a letter from London, I spoke of the beautiful figure of the Greek slave, by Powers. At Florence I saw in his studio, the original model, from which his workmen were cutting two copies in marble. At the same place I saw his Proserpine, an ideal bust of great sweetness and beauty, the fair chest swelling out from a circle of leaves of the acanthus. About this also the workmen were busy, and I 237 learned that seven copies of it had been recently ordered from the hand of the artist. By its side stood the unfinished statue of Eve, with the fatal apple in her hand, an earlier work, which the world has just begun to admire. I find that connoisseurs are divided in opinion concerning the merit of Powers as a sculptor.

All allow him the highest degree of skill in execution, but some deny that he has shown equal ability in his conceptions. "He is confessedly," said one of them to me, who, however, had not seen his Greek slave, "the greatest sculptor of busts in the world—equal, in fact, to any that the world ever saw; the finest heads of antiquity are not of a higher order than his." He then went on to express his regret that Powers had not confined his labors to a department in which he was so pre-eminent. I have heard that Powers, who possesses great mechanical skill, has devised several methods of his own for giving precision and perfection to the execution of his works. It may be that my unlearned eyes are dazzled by this perfection, but really I can not imagine any thing more beautiful of its kind than his statue of the Greek slave.

Gray is at this moment in Florence, though he is soon coming to Rome. He has made some copies from Titian, one of which I saw. It was a Madonna and child, in which the original painting was rendered with all the fidelity of a mirror. So indisputably was it a Titian, and so free from the stiffness of a copy, that, as I looked at it, I 238 fully

Library of Congress

sympathized with the satisfaction expressed by the artist at having attained the method of giving with ease the peculiarity of coloring which belongs to Titian's pictures.

An American landscape painter of high merit is G. L. Brown, now residing at Florence. He possesses great knowledge of detail, which he knows how to keep in its place, subduing it, and rendering it subservient to the general effect. I saw in his studio two or three pictures, in which I admired his skill in copying the various forms of foliage and other objects, nor was I less pleased to see that he was not content with this sort of merit, but, in going back from the foreground, had the art of passing into that appearance of an infinity of forms and outlines which the eye meets with in nature. I could not help regretting that one who copied nature so well, should not prefer to represent her as she appears in our own fresh and glorious land, instead of living in Italy and painting Italian landscapes.

To refer again to foreign artists—before I left Florence I visited the annual exhibition which had been opened in the Academy of the Fine Arts. There were one or two landscapes reminding me somewhat of Cole's manner, but greatly inferior, and one or two good portraits, and two or three indifferent historical pictures. The rest appeared to me decidedly bad; wretched landscapes; portraits, some of which were absolutely hideous, stiff, ill-colored, and full of grimace.

Here at Rome, we have an American sculptor of great ability, Henry K. Brown, who is just beginning to be talked about. He is executing a statue of Ruth gleaning in the field of Boaz, of which the model has been ready for some months, and is also modelling a figure of Rebecca at the Well. When I first saw his Ruth I was greatly struck with it, but after visiting the studios of Wyatt and Gibson, and observing their sleek imitations of Grecian art, their learned and faultless statues, nymphs or goddesses or gods of the Greek mythology, it was with infinite pleasure that my eyes rested again on the figure and face of Ruth, perhaps not inferior in perfection of form, but certainly informed with a deep human feeling which I found not in their elaborate works. The artist has chosen

Library of Congress

the moment in which Ruth is addressed by Boaz as she stands among the gleaners. He quoted to me the lines of Keats, on the song of the nightingale—

"Perchance the self-same song that found a path To the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home, She stood in tears amid the alien's corn."

She is not in tears, but her aspect is that of one who listens in sadness; her eyes are cast down, and her thoughts are of the home of her youth, in the land of Moab, Over her left arm hangs a handful of ears of wheat, which she has gathered from the ground, and her right rests on the drapery about her bosom. Nothing can be more graceful than her attitude or more expressive of melancholy sweetness and modesty than her physiognomy. One of the 240 copies which the artist was executing—there were two of them—is designed for a gentleman in Albany. Brown will shortly, or I am greatly mistaken, achieve a high reputation among the sculptors of the time.

Rosseter, an American painter, who has passed six years in Italy, is engaged on a large picture, the subject of which is taken from the same portion of Scripture history, and which is intended for the gallery of an American gentleman. It represents Naomi with her two daughters-in-law, when "Orpah kissed her, but Ruth clave unto her." The principal figures are those of the Hebrew matron and Ruth, who have made their simple preparations for their journey to the land of Israel, while Orpah is turning sorrowfully away to join a caravan of her country people. This group is well composed, and there is a fine effect of the rays of the rising sun on the mountains and rocks of Moab.

At the studio of Lang, a Philadelphia artist, I saw two agreeable pictures, one of which represents a young woman whom her attendants and companions are arraying for her bridal. As a companion piece to this, but not yet finished, he had upon the easel a picture of a beautiful girl, decked for espousals of a different kind, about to take the veil, and kneeling in the midst of a crowd of friends and priests, while one of them is cutting off

her glossy and flowing hair. Both pictures are designed for a Boston gentleman, but a duplicate of the first has already been painted for the King of Wirtemberg.

241

LETTER XXX. BUFFALO.—CLEVELAND.—DETROIT.

Steamer Oregon, Lake Huron, Off Thunder Bay, *July* 24, 1846.

As I approached the city of Buffalo the other morning, from the east, I found myself obliged to confess that much of the beauty of a country is owing to the season. For twenty or thirty miles before we reached Lake Erie, the fields of this fertile region looked more and more arid and sun-scorched, and I could not but contrast their appearance with that of the neighborhood of New York, where in a district comparatively sterile, an uncommonly showery season has kept the herbage fresh and deep, and made the trees heavy with leaves. Here, on the contrary, I saw meadows tinged by the drought with a reddish hue, pastures grazed to the roots of the grass, and trees spreading what seemed to me a meagre shade. Yet the harvests of wheat, and even of hay, in western New York, are said to be by no means scanty.

Buffalo continues to extend on every side, but the late additions to the city do not much improve its beauty. Its nucleus of well-built streets does not seem to have grown much broader within the last five years, but the suburbs 21 242 are rapidly spreading—small wooden houses, scattered or in clusters, built hastily for emigrants along unpaved and powdery streets. I saw, however, on a little excursion which I made into the surrounding country, that pleasant little neighborhoods are rising up at no great distance, with their neat houses, their young trees, and their new shrubbery. They have a fine building material at Buffalo—a sort of brown stone, easily wrought—but I was sorry to see that few of the houses built of it, whether in the town or country, were new.

We visited the new fort which the government is erecting on the lake, a little to the north of the town, commanding the entrance of Niagara river. It is small, but of wonderful apparent

Library of Congress

strength, with walls of prodigious thickness, and so sturdy in its defences that it seemed to me one might as well think of cannonading the cliffs of Weehawken. It is curious to see how, as we grow more ingenious in the means of attack, we devise more effectual means of defence. A castle of the middle ages, in which a grim warrior of that time would hold his enemies at bay for years, would now be battered down before breakfast. The finest old forts of the last century are now found to be unsafe against attack. That which we have at St. Augustine was an uncommonly good sample of its kind, but when I was in Florida, three or four years since, an engineer of the United States was engaged in reconstructing it. Do mankind gain any thing by these improvements, as they are called, in the art of war? Do 243 not these more dreadful engines of attack on the one side, and these more perfect means of protection on the other, leave the balance just where it was before?

On Tuesday evening, at seven o'clock, we took passage in the steamer Oregon, for Chicago, and soon lost sight of the roofs and spires of Buffalo. A lady of Buffalo on her way to Cleveland placed herself at the piano, and sang several songs with such uncommon sweetness and expression that I saw no occasion to be surprised at what I heard of the concert of Leopold de Meyer, at Buffalo, the night before. The concert room was crowded with people clinging to each other like bees when they swarm, and the whole affair seemed an outbreak of popular enthusiasm. A veteran teacher of music in Buffalo, famous for being hard to be pleased by any public musical entertainment, found himself unable to sit still during the first piece played by De Meyer, but rose, in the fullness of his delight, and continued standing. When the music ceased, he ran to him and shook both of his hands, again and again, with most uncomfortable energy. At the end of the next performance he sprang again on the platform and hugged the artist so rapturously that the room rang with laughter. De Meyer was to give another concert on Tuesday evening at Niagara Falls, and the people of Buffalo were preparing to follow him.

The tastes of our people are certainly much changed within the last twenty years. A friend of mine used to relate, as a good joke, the conversation of two men, who 244 came to the conclusion that Paganini was the greatest man in the world. They were only a little in

Library of Congress

advance of their age. If such are the honors reaped by De Meyer, I shall not be astonished if Sivori, when he comes over, passes for the greatest man of his time.

The next morning found us with the southern shore of Lake Erie in sight—a long line of woods, with here and there a cluster of habitations on the shore. "That village where you see the light-house," said one of the passengers, who came from the hills of Maine, "is Grand River, and from that place to Cleveland, which is thirty miles distant, you have the most beautiful country under the sun—perfectly beautiful, sir; not a hill the whole way, and the finest farms that were ever seen; you can buy a good farm there for two thousand dollars." In two or three hours afterward we were at Cleveland, and I hastened on shore.

It is situated beyond a steep bank of the lake, nearly as elevated as the shore at Brooklyn, which we call Brooklyn Heights. As I stood on the edge of this bank and looked over the broad lake below me, stretching beyond the sight and quivering in the summer wind, I was reminded of the lines of Southey:

—"Along the bending line of shore Such hue is thrown as when the peacock's neck
Assumes its proudest tint of amethyst, Embathed in emerald glory."

But it was not only along the line of the shore that these 245 hues prevailed; the whole lake glowed with soft amethystine and emerald tinges, in irregular masses, like the shades of watered silk. Cleveland stands in that beautiful country without a hill, of which my fellow-passenger spoke—a thriving village yet to grow into a proud city of the lake country. It is built upon broad dusty ways, in which not a pebble is seen in the fat dark earth of the lake shore, and which are shaded with locust-trees, the variety called seed-locust, with crowded twigs and clustered foliage—a tree chosen, doubtless, for its rapid growth, as the best means of getting up a shade at the shortest notice. Here and there were gardens filled with young fruit-trees; among the largest and hardiest in appearance was the peach-tree, which here spreads broad and sturdy branches, escapes the diseases that make it a short-lived tree in the Atlantic states, and produces fruit of great size and richness. One of

Library of Congress

my fellow-passengers could hardly find adequate expressions to signify his high sense of the deliciousness of the Cleveland Peaches.

I made my way to a street of shops: it had a busy appearance, more so than usual, I was told, for a company of circus-riders, whose tents I had seen from a distance on the lake, was in town, and this had attracted a throng of people from the country. I saw a fruit-stall tended by a man who had the coarsest red hair I think I ever saw, and of whom I bought two or three enormous "bough apples," as he called them. He apologized for the price he demanded. 21* 246 "The farmers," said he, "know that just now there is a call for their early fruit, while the circus people are in town, and they make me pay a 'igh price for it." I told him I perceived he was no Yankee. "I am a Londoner," he replied; "and I left London twelve years ago to slave and be a poor man in Ohio." He acknowledged, however, that he had two or three times got together some property, "but the Lord," he said, "laid his hand on it."

On returning to the steamer, I found a party of country people, mostly young persons of both sexes, thin and lank figures, by no means equal, as productions of the country, to their bough apples. They passed through the fine spacious cabin on the upper deck, extending between the state-rooms the whole length of the steamer. At length they came to a large mirror, which stood at the stern, and seemed by its reflection to double the length of the cabin. They walked on, as if they would extend their promenade into the mirror, when suddenly observing the reflection of their own persons advancing, and thinking it another party, they politely made way to let it pass. The party in the mirror at the same moment turned to the same side, which first showed them the mistake they had made. The passengers had some mirth at their expense, but I must do our visitors the justice to say that they joined in the laugh with a very good grace.

The same evening, at twelve o'clock, we were at Detroit. "You must lock your state-rooms in the night," said one of 247 the persons employed about the vessel, "for Detroit is full of thieves." We followed the advice, slept soundly, and saw nothing of the thieves, nor

of Detroit either, for the steamboat was again on her passage through Lake St. Clair at three this morning, and when I awoke we were moving over the flats, as they are called, at the upper end of the lake. The steamer was threading her way in a fog between large patches of sedge of a pea-green color. We had waited several hours at Detroit, because this passage is not safe at night, and steamers of a larger size are sometimes grounded here in the day-time.

I had hoped, when I began, to bring down the narrative of my voyage to this moment, but my sheet is full, and I shall give you the remainder in another letter.

248

LETTER XXXI. A TRIP FROM DETROIT TO MACKINAW.

Steamer Oregon, Lake Michigan, *July 25, 1846.*

Soon after passing the flats described in my last letter, and entering the river St. Clair, the steamer stopped to take in wood on the Canadian side. Here I went on shore. All that we could see of the country was a road along the bank, a row of cottages at a considerable distance from each other along the road, a narrow belt of cleared fields behind them, and beyond the fields the original forest standing like a long lofty wall, with its crowded stems of enormous size and immense height, rooted in the strong soil—ashes and maples and elms, the largest of their species. Scattered in the foreground were numbers of leafless elms, so huge that the settlers, as if in despair of bringing them to the ground by the ax, had girdled them and left them to decay and fall at their leisure.

We went up to one of the houses, before which stood several of the family attracted to the door by the sight of our steamer. Among them was an intelligent-looking man, 249 originally from the state of New York, who gave quick and shrewd answers to our inquiries. He told us of an Indian settlement about twenty miles further up the St. Clair. Here dwell a remnant of the Chippewa tribe, collected by the Canadian government, which has built for them comfortable log-houses with chimneys, furnished them with horses and neat cattle,

Library of Congress

and utensils of agriculture, erected a house of worship, and given them a missionary. "The design of planting them here," said the settler, "was to encourage them to cultivate the soil."

"And what has been the success of the plan?" I asked.

"It has met with no success at all," he answered. "The worst thing that the government could do for these people is to give them every thing as it has done, and leave them under no necessity to provide for themselves. They chop over a little land, an acre or two to a family; their squaws plant a little corn and a few beans, and this is the extent of their agriculture. They pass their time in hunting and fishing, or in idleness. They find deer and bears in the woods behind them, and fish in the St. Clair before their doors, and they squander their yearly pensions. In one respect they are just like white men, they will not work if they can live without."

"What fish do they find in the St. Clair?"

"Various sorts. Trout and white-fish are the finest, but they are not so abundant at this season. Sturgeon and pike are just now in season, and the pike are excellent." 250 One of us happening to observe that the river might easily be crossed by swimming, the settler answered:

"Not so easily as you might think. The river is as cold as a well, and the swimmer would soon be chilled through, and perhaps taken with the cramp. It is this coldness of the water which makes the fish so fine at this season."

This mention of sturgeons tempts me to relate an anecdote which I heard as I was coming up the Hudson. A gentleman who lived east of the river, a little back of Tivoli, caught last spring one of these fish, which weighed about a hundred and sixty pounds. He carried it to a large pond near his house, the longest diameter of which is about a mile, and without taking it out of the net in which he had caught it, he knotted part of the meshes closely

Library of Congress

around it, and attaching them to a pair of lines like reins, put the creature into the water. To the end of the lines he had taken care to fasten a buoy, to mark the place of the fish in the pond. He keeps a small boat, and when he has a mind to make a water-excursion, he rows to the place where the buoy is floating, ties the lines to the boat and, pulling them so as to disturb the fish, is drawn backward and forward with great rapidity over the surface. The pond, in its deepest part, has only seven feet of water, so that there is no danger of being dragged under.

We now proceeded up the river, and in about two hours came to a neat little village on the British side, with a windmill, a little church, and two or three little cottages, 251 prettily screened by young trees. Immediately beyond this was the beginning of the Chippewa settlement of which we had been told. Log-houses, at the distance of nearly a quarter of a mile from each other, stood in a long row beside the river, with scattered trees about them, the largest of the forest, some girdled and leafless, some untouched and green, the smallest trees between having been cut away. Here and there an Indian woman, in a blue dress and bare-headed, was walking along the road; cows and horses were grazing near the houses; patches of maize were seen, tended in a slovenly manner and by no means clear of bushes, but nobody was at work in the fields. Two females came down to the bank, with paddles, and put off into the river in a birch-bark canoe, the ends of which were carved in the peculiar Indian fashion. A little beyond stood a group of boys and girls on the water's edge, the boys in shirts and leggins, silently watching the steamer as it shot by them. Still further on a group of children of both sexes, seven in number, came running with shrill cries down the bank. It was then about twelve o'clock, and the weather was extremely sultry. The boys in an instant threw off their shirts and leggins, and plunged into the water with shouts, but the girls were in before them, for they wore only a kind of petticoat which they did not take off, but cast themselves into the river at once and slid through the clear water like seals.

This little Indian colony on the edge of the forest extends 252 for several miles along the river, where its banks are highest and best adapted to the purpose of settlement. It ends

Library of Congress

at last just below the village which bears the name of Fort Saranac, in the neighborhood of which I was shown an odd-looking wooden building, and was told that this was the house of worship provided for the Indians by the government.

At Fort Huron, a village on the American side, opposite to Fort Saranac, we stopped to land passengers. Three Indians made their appearance on the shore, one of whom, a very large man, wore a kind of turban, and a white blanket made into a sort of frock, with bars of black in several places, altogether a striking costume. One of this party, a well-dressed young man, stopped to speak with somebody in the crowd on the wharf, but the giant in the turban, with his companion, strode rapidly by, apparently not deigning to look at us, and disappeared in the village. He was scarcely out of sight when I perceived a boat approaching the shore with a curiously mottled sail. As it came nearer I saw that it was a quilt of patchwork taken from a bed. In the bottom of the boat lay a barrel, apparently of flour, a stout young fellow pulled a pair of oars, and a slender-waisted damsel, neatly dressed, sat in the stern, plying a paddle with a dexterity which she might have learned from the Chippewa ladies, and guiding the course of the boat which passed with great speed over the water.

We were soon upon the broad waters of Lake Huron, and 253 when the evening closed upon us we were already out of sight of land. The next morning I was awakened by the sound of rain on the hurricane deck. A cool east wind was blowing. I opened the outer door of my state-room, and snuffed the air which was strongly impregnated with the odor of burnt leaves or grass, proceeding, doubtless, from the burning of woods or prairies somewhere on the shores of the lake. For mile after mile, for hour after hour, as we flew through the mist, the same odor was perceptible: the atmosphere of the lake was full of it.

“Will it rain all day ?” I asked of a fellow-passenger, a Salem man, in a white cravat.

“The clouds are thin,” he answered; “the sun will soon burn them off.”

In fact, the sun soon melted away the clouds, and before ten o'clock I was shown, to the north of us, the dim shore of the Great Manitoulin Island, with the faintly descried opening called the West Strait, through which a throng of speculators in copper mines are this summer constantly passing to the Sault de Ste. Marie. On the other side was the sandy isle of Bois Blanc, the name of which is commonly corrupted into Bob Low Island, thickly covered with pines, and showing a tall light-house on the point nearest us. Beyond another point lay like a cloud the island of Mackinaw. I had seen it once before, but now the hazy atmosphere magnified it into a lofty mountain; its limestone cliffs impending over the water seemed larger; the white fort 22 254 —white as snow—built from the quarries of the island, looked more commanding, and the rocky crest above it seemed almost to rise to the clouds. There was a good deal of illusion in all this, as we were convinced as we came nearer, but Mackinaw with its rocks rising from the most transparent waters that the earth pours out from her springs, is a stately object in any condition of the atmosphere. The captain of our steamer allowed us but a moment at Mackinaw; a moment to gaze into the clear waters, and count the fish as they played about without fear twenty or thirty feet below our steamer, as plainly seen as if they lay in the air; a moment to look at the fort on the heights, dazzling the eyes with its new whiteness; a moment to observe the habitations of this ancient village, some of which show you roofs and walls of red-cedar bark confined by horizontal strips of wood, a kind of architecture between the wigwam and the settler's cabin. A few baskets of fish were lifted on board, in which I saw trout of enormous size, trout a yard in length, and white-fish smaller, but held perhaps in higher esteem, and we turned our course to the straits which lead into Lake Michigan.

I remember hearing a lady say that she was tired of improvements, and only wanted to find a place that was finished, where she might live in peace. I think I shall recommend Mackinaw to her. I saw no change in the place since my visit to it five years ago. It is so lucky as to have no *back-country*, it offer no advantages to speculation 255 tion of any sort; it produces, it is true, the finest potatoes in the world, but none for exportation. It may, however, on account of its very cool summer climate, become a fashionable watering-

place, in which case it must yield to the common fate of American villages and improve, as the phrase is.

256

LETTER XXXII. JOURNEY FROM DETROIT TO PRINCETON.

Princeton, Illinois, *July* 31, 1846.

Soon after leaving the island of Mackinaw we entered the straits and passed into Lake Michigan. The odor of burnt leaves continued to accompany us, and from the western shore of the lake, thickly covered with wood, we saw large columns of smoke, several miles apart, rising into the hazy sky. The steamer turned towards the eastern shore, and about an hour before sunset stopped to take in wood at the upper Maneto island, where we landed and strolled into the forest. Part of the island is high, but this, where we went on shore, consists of hillocks and hollows of sand, like the waves of the lake in one of its storms, and looking as if successive storms had swept them up from the bottom. They were covered with an enormous growth of trees which must have stood for centuries. We admired the astonishing transparency of the water on this shore, the clean sands without any intermixture of mud, the pebbles of almost chalky whiteness, and the stones in the edge of the lake, to which adhered no slime, nor green moss, nor aquatic weed. In the light-green depths, far down, but 257 distinctly seen, shoals of fish, some of them of large size, came quietly playing about the huge hull of our steamer.

On the shore were two log-houses inhabited by woodmen, one of whom drew a pail of water for the refreshment of some of the passengers, from a well dug in the sand by his door. "It is not so good as the lake water," said I, for I saw it was not so clear. "It is colder, though," answered the man; "but I must say that there is no purer or sweeter water in the world than that of our lake."

Next morning we were coasting the western shore of Lake Michigan, a high bank presenting a long line of forest. This was broken by the little town of Sheboygan, with its

Library of Congress

light-house among the shrubs of the bank, its cluster of houses just built, among which were two hotels, and its single schooner lying at the mouth of a river. You probably never heard of Sheboygan before; it has just sprung up in the forests of Wisconsin; the leaves have hardly withered on the trees that were felled to make room for its houses; but it will make a noise in the world yet. "It is the prettiest place on the lake," said a passenger, whom we left there, with three chubby and healthy children, a lady who had already lived long enough at Sheboygan to be proud of it.

Further on we came to Milwaukee, which is rapidly becoming one of the great cities of the West. It lies within a semicircle of green pastoral declivities sprinkled with scattered trees, where the future streets are to be built. 22* 258 We landed at a kind of wharf, formed by a long platform of planks laid on piles, under which the water flows, and extending for some distance into the lake, and along which a car, running on a railway, took the passengers and their baggage, and a part of the freight of the steamer to the shore.

"Will you go up to town, sir?" was the question with which I was saluted by the drivers of a throng of vehicles of all sorts, as soon as I reached the land. They were ranged along a firm sandy beach between the lake and the river of Milwaukee. On one side the light-green waters of the lake, of crystalline clearness, came rolling in before the wind, and on the other the dark thick waters of the river lay still and stagnant in the sun. We did not go up to the town, but we could see that it was compactly built, and in one quarter nobly. A year or two since that quarter had been destroyed by fire, and on the spot several large and lofty warehouses had been erected, with an hotel of the largest class. They were of a fine light-brown color, and when I learned that they were of brick, I inquired of a by-stander if that was the natural color of the material. "They are Milwaukee brick," he answered, "and neither painted nor stained; and are better brick besides than are made at the eastward." Milwaukee is said to contain, at present, about ten thousand inhabitants. Here the belt of forest that borders the lake stretches back for several miles to the prairies of Wisconsin. "The Germans," said a 259 passenger, "are already in the woods hacking at the trees, and will soon open the country to the prairies." We made a short stop at Racine,

Library of Congress

prettily situated on the bank among the scattered trees of an oak opening, and another at Southport, a rival town eleven miles further south. It is surprising how many persons travel, as way-passengers, from place to place on the shores of these lakes. Five years ago the number was very few, now they comprise, at least, half the number on board a steamboat plying between Buffalo and Chicago. When all who travel from Chicago to Buffalo shall cross the peninsula of Michigan by the more expeditious route of the railway, the Chicago and Buffalo line of steamers, which its owners claim to be the finest line in the world, will still be crowded with people taken up or to be set down at some of the intermediate towns.

When we awoke the next morning our steamer was at Chicago. Any one who had seen this place, as I had done five years ago, when it contained less than five thousand people, would find some difficulty in recognizing it now when its population is more than fifteen thousand. It has its long rows of warehouses and shops, its bustling streets; its huge steamers, and crowds of lake-craft, lying at the wharves; its villas embowered with trees; and its suburbs, consisting of the cottages of German and Irish laborers, stretching northward along the lake, and westward into the prairies, and widening every day. The slovenly and raw 260 appearance of a new settlement begins in many parts to disappear. The Germans have already a garden in a little grove for their holidays, as in their towns in the old country, and the Roman Catholics have just finished a college for the education of those who are to proselyte the West.

The day was extremely hot, and at sunset we took a little drive along the belt of firm sand which forms the border of the lake. Light-green waves came to the shore in long lines, with a crest of foam, like a miniature surf, rolling in from that inland ocean, and as they dashed against the legs of the horses, and the wheels of our carriage, the air that played over them was exceedingly refreshing.

When we set out the following day in the stage-coach for Peru, I was surprised to see how the settlement of Chicago had extended westward into the open country. "Three years ago," said a traveller in the coach, "it was thought that this prairie could neither be

Library of Congress

inhabited nor cultivated. It is so level and so little elevated, that for weeks its surface would remain covered with water; but we have found that as it is intersected with roads, the water either runs off in the ditches of the highways, or is absorbed into the sand which lies below this surface of dark vegetable mould, and it is now, as you perceive, beginning to be covered with habitations.”

If you ever go by the stage-coach from Chicago to Peru, on the Illinois river, do not believe the glozing tongue of the agent who tells you that you will make the journey in 261 sixteen hours. Double the number, and you will be nearer the truth. A violent rain fell in the course of the morning; the coach was heavily loaded, nine passengers within, and three without, besides the driver; the day was hot, and the horses dragged us slowly through the black mud, which seemed to possess the consistency and tenacity of sticking-plaster. We had a dinner of grouse, which here in certain seasons, are sold for three cents apiece, at a little tavern on the road; we had passed the long green mound which bears the name of Mount Joliet, and now, a little before sunset, having travelled somewhat less than fifty miles, we were about to cross the channel of the Illinois canal for the second or third time.

There had once been a bridge at the crossing-place, but the water had risen in the canal, and the timbers and planks had floated away, leaving only the stones which formed its foundation. In attempting to ford the channel the blundering driver came too near the bridge; the coach-wheels on one side rose upon the stones, and on the other sank deep into the mud, and we were overturned in an instant. The outside passengers were pitched head-foremost into the canal, and four of those within were lying under water. We extricated ourselves as well as we could, the men waded out, the women were carried, and when we got on shore it was found that, although drenched with water and plastered with mud, nobody was either drowned or hurt.

262

A farm wagon passing at the moment, forded the canal without the least difficulty, and taking the female passengers, conveyed them to the next farm-house, about a mile

Library of Congress

distant. We got out the baggage, which was completely soaked with water, set up the carriage on its wheels, in doing which we had to stand waist high in the mud and water, and reached the hospitable farm-house about half-past nine o'clock. Its owner was an emigrant from Kinderhook, on the Hudson, who claimed to be a Dutchman and a Christian, and I have no reason to doubt that he was either. His kind family made us free of their house, and we passed the night in drying ourselves, and getting our baggage ready to proceed the next day.

We travelled in a vehicle built after the fashion of the English post-coach, set high upon springs, which is the most absurd kind of carriage for the roads of this country that could be devised. Those stage-wagons which ply on Long Island, in one of which you sometimes see about a score of Quakers and Quakeresses, present a much better model. Besides being tumbled into the canal, we narrowly escaped being overturned in a dozen other places, where the mud was deep or the roads uneven.

In my journey the next day, I was struck with the difference which five years had made in the aspect of the country. Frame or brick houses in many places had taken the places of log-cabins; the road for long distances now passed between fences, the broad prairie, inclosed, was turned into immense fields of maize, oats, and wheat, and was spotted here and there with young orchards, or little groves, and clumps of bright-green locust-trees, and where the prairie remained open, it was now depastured by large herds of cattle, its herbage shortened, and its flowers less numerous. The wheat harvest this year is said to have failed in northern Illinois. The rust has attacked the fields which promised the fairest, and they are left unreaped, to feed the quails and the prairie-hens.

Another tedious day's journey, over a specially bad road, brought us to Peru a little before midnight, and we passed the rest of the night at an inn just below the bank, on the margin of the river, in listening to the mosquitoes. A Massachusetts acquaintance the next morning furnished us with a comfortable conveyance to this pleasant neighborhood.

LETTER XXXIII. RETURN TO CHICAGO.

Chicago, *August 8*, 1846.

You may be certain that in returning to this place from Princeton I did not take the stage coach. I had no fancy for another plunge into the Illinois canal, nor for being overturned upon the prairies in one of those vehicles which seem to be set high in the air in order they may more easily lose their balance. We procured a private conveyance and made the journey in three days—three days of extreme heat, which compelled us to travel slowly. The quails, which had repaired for shade to the fences by the side of the road, ran from them into the open fields, as we passed, with their beaks open, as if panting with the excessive heat.

The number of these birds at the present time is very great. They swarm in the stubble fields and in the prairies, and manifest little alarm at the approach of man. Still more numerous, it appears to me, are the grouse, or prairie-hens, as they call them here, which we frequently saw walking leisurely, at our approach, into the grass from the road, whither they resorted for the sake of scattered grains of oats or wheat that had fallen from the loaded wagons going to 265 Chicago. At this season they are full fed and fearless, and fly heavily when they are started. We frequently saw them feeding at a very short distance from people at work in the fields. In some neighborhoods they seem almost as numerous as fowls in a poultry-yard. A settler goes out with his gun, and in a quarter of an hour brings in half a dozen birds which in the New York market would cost two dollars a pair. At one place where we stopped to dine, they gave us a kind of pie which seemed to me an appropriate dessert for a dinner of prairie-hens. It was made of the fruit of the western crab-apple, and was not unpalatable. The wild apple of this country is a small tree growing in thickets, natural orchards. In spring it is profusely covered with light-pink blossoms, which have the odor of violets, and at this season it is thickly hung with fruit of the color of its leaves.

Another wild fruit of the country is the plum, which grows in thickets, plum-patches, as they are called, where they are produced in great abundance, and sometimes, I am told, of excellent quality. In a drive which I took the other day from Princeton to the alluvial lands of the Bureau River, I passed by a declivity where the shrubs were red with the fruit, just beginning to ripen. The slope was sprinkled by them with crimson spots, and the odor of the fruit was quite agreeable. I have eaten worse plums than these from our markets, but I hear that there is a later variety, larger and of a yellow color, which is finer. 23

266

I spoke in my last of the change caused in the aspect of the country by cultivation. Now and then, however, you meet with views which seem to have lost nothing of their original beauty. One such we stopped to look at from an eminence in a broad prairie in Lee county, between Knox Grove and Pawpaw Grove. The road passes directly over the eminence, which is round and regular in form, with a small level on the summit, and bears the name of the Mound. On each side the view extends to a prodigious distance; the prairies sink into basins of immense breadth and rise into swells of vast extent; dark groves stand in the light-green waste of grass, and a dim blue border, apparently of distant woods, encircles the horizon. To give a pastoral air to the scene, large herds of cattle were grazing at no great distance from us.

I mentioned in my last letter that the wheat crop of northern Illinois has partially failed this year. But this is not the greatest calamity which has befallen this part of the country. The season is uncommonly sickly. We passed the first night of our journey at Pawpaw Grove—so named from the number of pawpaw-trees which grow in it, but which here scarcely find the summer long enough to perfect their fruit. The place has not had the reputation of being unhealthy, but now there was scarce a family in the neighborhood in which one or more was not ill with an intermittent or a bilious fever. At the inn where we stopped, the landlady, a stout Pennsylvania woman, was just so 267 far recovered as to be able, as she informed us, “to poke about;” and her daughter, a strapping lass, went out to pass the

night at the bedside of one of the numerous sick neighbors. The sickness was ascribed by the settlers to the extremely dry and hot weather following a rainy June. At almost every place where we stopped we heard similar accounts. Pale and hollow-eyed people were lounging about. "Is the place unhealthy," I asked one of them. " / reckon so," he answered; and his looks showed that he had sufficient reason. At Aurora, where we passed the second night, a busy little village, with mills and manufactories, on the Fox River, which here rushes swiftly over a stony bed, they confessed to the fever and ague. At Naperville, pleasantly situated among numerous groves and little prairies swelling into hills, we heard that the season was the most sickly the inhabitants had known. Here, at Chicago, which boasts, and with good reason, I believe, of its healthy site, dysenteries and bilious attacks are just now very common, with occasional cases of fever.

It is a common remark in this country, that the first cultivation of the earth renders any neighborhood more or less unhealthy. "Nature," said a western man to me, some years since, "resents the violence done her, and punishes those who first break the surface of the earth with the plough." The beautiful Rock River district, with its rapid stream, its noble groves, its banks disposed in natural terraces, with fresh springs gushing at their foot, and airy 268 prairies stretching away from their summits, was esteemed one of the most healthy countries iu the world as long as it had but few inhabitants. With the breaking up of the soil came in bilious fever and intermittents. A few years of cultivation will render the country more healthy, and these diseases will probably disappear, as they have done in some parts of western New York. I can remember the time when the "Genesee Country," as it was called, was thought quite a sickly region—a land just in the skirts of the shadow of death. It is now as healthy, I believe, as any part of the state.

269

LETTER XXXIV. VOYAGE TO SAULT STE. MARIF

Sault Ste. Marie, *August* 18, 1846.

Library of Congress

When we left Chicago in the steamer, the other morning, all the vessels in the port had their flags displayed at half-mast in token of dissatisfaction with the fate of the harbor bill. You may not recollect that the bill set apart half a million of dollars for the construction or improvement of various harbors of the lakes, and authorized the deepening of the passages through the St. Clair Flats, now intricate and not quite safe, by which these bulky steamers make their way from the lower lakes to the upper. The people of the lake region had watched the progress of the bill through Congress with much interest and anxiety, and congratulated each other when at length it received a majority of votes in both houses. The President's veto has turned these congratulations into expressions of disappointment which are heard on all sides, sometimes expressed with a good deal of energy. But, although the news of the veto reached Chicago two or three days before we left the place, nobody had seen the message in which it was contained. Perhaps the force of the President's reasonings will 23* 270 reconcile the minds of people here to the disappointment of their hopes.

It was a hot August morning as the steamer Wisconsin, an unwieldy bulk, dipping and bobbing upon the small waves, and trembling at every stroke of the engine, swept out into the lake. The southwest wind during the warmer portion of the summer months is a sort of Sirocco in Illinois. It blows with considerable strength, but passing over an immense extent of heated plains it brings no coolness. It was such an air that accompanied us on our way north from Chicago; and as the passengers huddled into the shady places outside of the state-rooms on the upper deck, I thought of the flocks of quails I had seen gasping in the shadow of the rail-fences on the prairies.

People here expose themselves to a draught of air with much less scruple than they do in the Atlantic states. "We do not take cold by it," they said to me, when I saw them sitting in a current of wind, after perspiring freely. If they do not take cold, it is odds but they take something else, a fever perhaps, or what is called a bilious attack. The vicissitudes of climate at Chicago and its neighborhood are more sudden and extreme than with us, but

Library of Congress

the inhabitants say that they are not often the cause of catarrhs, as in the Atlantic states. Whatever may be the cause, I have met with no person since I came to the West, who appeared to have a catarrh. From this region perhaps will hereafter proceed singers with the clearest pipes.

271

Some forty miles beyond Chicago we stopped for half an hour at Little Fort, one of those flourishing little towns which are springing up on the lake shore, to besiege future Congresses for money to build their harbors. This settlement has started up in the woods within the last three or four years, and its cluster of roofs, two of the broadest of which cover respectable-looking hotels, already makes a considerable figure when viewed from the lake. We passed to the shore over a long platform of planks framed upon two rows of posts or piles planted in the sandy shallows. "We make a port in this manner on any part of the western shore of the lake," said a passenger, "and convenient ports they are, except in very high winds. On the eastern shore, the coast of Michigan, they have not this advantage; the ice and the northwest winds would rend such a wharf as this in pieces. On this side too, the water of the lake, except when an east wind blows, is smoother than on the Michigan coast, and the steamers therefore keep under the shelter of this bank."

At Southport, still further north, in the new state of Wisconsin, we procured a kind of omnibus and were driven over the town, which, for a new settlement, is uncommonly pretty. We crossed a narrow inlet of the lake, a creek in the proper sense of the term, a winding channel, with water in the midst, and a rough growth of water-flags and sedges on the sides. Among them grew the wild rice, its bending spikes, heavy with grain, almost ready for the harvest.

272

"In the northern marshes of Wisconsin," said one of our party, "I have seen the Indian women gathering this grain. Two of them take their places in a canoe; one of them seated in the stern pushes it with her paddle through the shallows of standing water, while the

Library of Congress

other, sitting forward, bends the heads of the rice-plant over the sides of the canoe, strikes them with a little stick and causes the grain to fall within it. In this way are collected large quantities, which serve as the winter food of the Menomonies, and some other tribes." The grain of the wild rice, I was told, is of a dark color, but palatable as food. The gentleman who gave me this account had made several attempts to procure it in a fit state to be sown, for Judge Buel, of Albany, who was desirous of trying its cultivation on the grassy shallows of our eastern rivers. He was not successful at first, because, as soon as the grain is collected, it is kiln-dried by the Indians, which destroys the vegetative principle. At length, however, he obtained and sent on a small quantity of the fresh rice, but it reached Judge Buel only a short time before his death, and the experiment probably has not been made.

On one side of the creek was a sloping bank of some height, where tall old forest trees were growing. Among these stood three houses, just built, and the space between them and the water was formed into gardens with regular terraces faced with turf. Another turn of our vehicle brought us into a public square, where the oaks of the original 273 forest were left standing, a miniature of the *Champs Elysées*, surrounding which, among the trees, stand many neat houses, some of them built of a drab-colored brick. Back of the town, we had a glimpse of a prairie approaching within half a mile of the river. We were next driven through a street of shops, and thence to our steamer. The streets of Southport are beds of sand, and one of the passengers who professed to speak from some experience, described the place as haunted by myriads of fleas.

It was not till about one o'clock of the second night after leaving Chicago, that we landed at Mackinaw, and after an infinite deal of trouble in getting our baggage together, and keeping it together, we were driven to the Mission House, a plain, comfortable old wooden house, built thirty or forty years since, by a missionary society, and now turned into an hotel. Beside the road, close to the water's edge, stood several wigwams of the Potawottamies, pyramids of poles wrapped around with rush matting, each containing a family asleep. The place was crowded with people on their way to the mining region of

Library of Congress

Lake Superior, or returning from it, and we were obliged to content ourselves with narrow accommodations for the night.

At half-past seven the next morning we were on our way to the Sault Ste. Marie, in the little steamer General Scott. The wind was blowing fresh, and a score of persons who had intended to visit the Sault were withheld by the fear of seasickness, so that half a dozen of us had the steamer to 274 ourselves. In three or four hours we found ourselves gliding out of the lake, through smooth water, between two low points of land covered with firs and pines into the west strait. We passed Drummond's Island, and then coasted St. Joseph's Island, on the woody shore of which I was shown a solitary house. There I was told lives a long-nosed Englishman, a half-pay officer, with two wives, sisters, each the mother of a numerous offspring. This English polygamist has been more successful in seeking solitude than in avoiding notoriety. The very loneliness of his habitation on the shore causes it to be remarked, and there is not a passenger who makes the voyage to the Sault, to whom his house is not pointed out, and his story related. It was hinted to me that he had a third wife in Toronto, but I have my private doubts of this part of the story, and suspect that it was thrown in to increase my wonder.

Beyond the island of St. Joseph we passed several islets of rock with fir-trees growing from the clefts. Here, in summer, I was told, the Indians often set up their wigwams, and subsist by fishing. There were none in sight as we passed, but we frequently saw on either shore the skeletons of the Chippewa habitations. These consist, not like those of the Potawottamies, of a circle of sticks placed in the form of a cone, but of slender poles bent into circles, so as to make an almost regular hemisphere, over which, while it serves as a dwelling, birch-bark and mats of bulrushes are thrown.

275

On the western side of the passage, opposite to St. Joseph's Island. stretches the long coast of Sugar Island, luxuriant with an extensive forest of the sugar-maple. Here the Indians manufacture maple-sugar in the spring. I inquired concerning their agriculture.

Library of Congress

"They plant no corn nor squashes," said a passenger, who had resided for some time at the Sault; "they will not ripen in this climate; but they plant potatoes in the sugar-bush, and dig them when the spring opens. They have no other agriculture; they plant no beans as I believe the Indians do elsewhere."

A violent squall of wind and rain fell upon the water just as we entered that broad part of the passage which bears the name of Muddy Lake. In ordinary weather the waters are here perfectly pure and translucent, but now their agitation brought up the loose earth from the shallow bottom, and made them as turbid as the Missouri, with the exception of a narrow channel in the midst where the current runs deep. Rocky hills now began to show themselves to the east of us; we passed the sheet of water known by the name of Lake George, and came to a little river which appeared to have its source at the foot of a precipitous ridge on the British side. It is called Garden River, and a little beyond it, on the same side, lies Garden Village, inhabited by the Indians. It was now deserted, the Indians having gone to attend a great assemblage of their race, held on one of the Manitoulin Islands, where they are to receive their 276 annual payments from the British government. Here were log-houses, and skeletons of wigwams, from which the coverings had been taken. An Indian, when he travels, takes with him his family and his furniture, the matting for his wigwam, his implements for hunting and fishing, his dogs and cats, and finds a home wherever he finds poles for a dwelling. A tornado had recently passed over the Garden Village. The numerous girdled-trees which stood on its little clearing, had been twisted off midway or near the ground by the wind, and the roofs had, in some instances, been lifted from the cabins.

At length, after a winding voyage of sixty miles, between wild banks of forest, in some places smoking with fires, in some looking as if never violated either by fire or steel, with huge carcasses of trees mouldering on the ground, and venerable trees standing over them, bearded with streaming moss, we came in sight of the white rapids of the Sault Sainte Marie. We passed the humble cabins of the half-breeds on either shore, with here

and there a round wigwam near the water; we glided by a white chimney standing behind a screen of fir-trees, which, we were told, had belonged to the dwelling of Tanner, who himself set fire to his house the other day, before murdering Mr. Schoolcraft, and in a few minutes were at the wharf of this remotest settlement of the northwest.

277

LETTER XXXV. FALLS OF THE ST. MARY.

Sault Ste. Marie, *August* 15, 1846.

A crowd had assembled on the wharf of the American village at the Sault Sainte Marie, popularly called the Soo, to witness our landing; men of all ages and complexions, in hats and caps of every form and fashion, with beards of every length and color, among which I discovered two or three pairs of mustaches. It was a party of copper-mine speculators, just flitting from Copper Harbor and Eagle River, mixed with a few Indian and half-breed inhabitants of the place. Among them I saw a face or two quite familiar in Wall-street.

I had a conversation with an intelligent geologist, who had just returned from an examination of the copper mines of Lake Superior. He had pitched his tent in the fields near the village, choosing to pass the night in this manner, as he had done for several weeks past, rather than in a crowded inn. In regard to the mines, he told me that the external tokens, the surface indications, as he called them, were more favorable than those of any copper mines in the world. They are still, however, mere surface indications; 24 278 the veins had not been worked to that depth which was necessary to determine their value with any certainty. The mixture of silver with the copper he regarded as not giving any additional value to the mines, inasmuch as it is only occasional and rare. Sometimes, he told me, a mass of metal would be discovered of the size of a man's fist, or smaller, composed of copper and silver, both metals closely united, yet both perfectly pure and unalloyed with each other. The masses of virgin copper found in beds of gravel are, however, the most remarkable feature of these mines. One of them which has been

Library of Congress

discovered this summer, but which has not been raised, is estimated to weigh twenty tons. I saw in the propeller Independence, by which this party from the copper mines was brought down to the Sault, one of these masses, weighing seventeen hundred and fifty pounds, with the appearance of having once been fluid with heat. It was so pure that it might have been cut in pieces by cold steel and stamped at once into coin.

Two or three years ago this settlement of the Sault de Ste. Marie, was but a military post of the United States, in the midst of a village of Indians and half-breeds. There were, perhaps, a dozen white residents in the place, including the family of the Baptist Missionary and the agent of the American Fur Company, which had removed its station hither from Mackinaw, and built its warehouse on this river. But since the world has begun to talk of the copper mines of Lake Superior, settlers flock into the place; carpenters are 279 busy in knocking up houses with all haste on the government lands, and large warehouses have been built upon piles driven into the shallows of the St. Mary. Five years hence, the primitive character of the place will be altogether lost, and it will have become a bustling Yankee town, resembling the other new settlements of the West.

Here the navigation from lake to lake is interrupted by the falls or rapids of the river St. Mary, from which the place receives its name. The crystalline waters of Lake Superior on their way through the channel of this river to Lake Huron, here rush, and foam, and roar, for about three quarters of a mile, over rocks and large stones.

Close to the rapids, with birchen-canoes moored in little inlets, is a village of the Indians, consisting of log-cabins and round wigwams, on a shrubby level, reserved to them by the government. The morning after our arrival, we went through this village in search of a canoe and a couple of Indians, to make the descent of the rapids, which is one of the first things that a visitor to the Sault must think of. In the first wigwam that we entered were three men and two women as drunk as men and women could well be. The squaws were speechless and motionless, too far gone, as it seemed, to raise either hand or foot; the men though apparently unable to rise were noisy, and one of them, who called himself

Library of Congress

a half-breed and spoke a few words of English, seemed disposed to quarrel. Before the next door was a woman busy in washing, who spoke a little English. 280 “The old man out there,” she said, in answer to our questions, “can paddle canoe, but he is very drunk, he can not do it to-day.”

“Is there nobody else,” we asked, “who will take us down the falls?”

“I don't know; the Indians all drunk to-day.” “Why is that? why are they all drunk to-day?” “Oh, the whisky,” answered the woman, giving us to understand, that when an Indian could get whisky, he got drunk as a matter of course.

By this time the man had come up, and after addressing us with the customary “*bon jour*,” manifested a curiosity to know the nature of our errand. The woman explained it to him in English.

“Oh, messieurs, je vous servirai,” said he, for he spoke Canadian French; “I go, I go.”

We told him that we doubted whether he was quite sober enough.

“Oh, messieurs, je suis parfaitement capable—first rate, first rate.”

We shook him off as soon as we could, but not till after he had time to propose that we should wait till the next day, and to utter the maxim, “Whisky, good—too much whisky, no good.”

In a log-cabin, which some half-breeds were engaged in building, we found two men who were easily persuaded to leave their work and pilot us over the rapids. They took 281 one of the canoes which lay in a little inlet close at hand, and entering it, pushed it with their long poles up the stream in the edge of the rapids. Arriving at the head of the rapids, they took in our party, which consisted of five, and we began the descent. At each end of the canoe sat a half-breed, with a paddle, to guide it while the current drew us rapidly down among the agitated waters. It was surprising with what dexterity they kept us in the

Library of Congress

smoothest part of the water, seeming to know the way down as well as if it had been a beaten path in the fields.

At one time we would seem to be directly approaching a rock against which the waves were dashing, at another to be descending into a hollow of the waters in which our canoe would be inevitably filled, but a single stroke of the paddle given by the man at the prow put us safely by the seeming danger. So rapid was the descent, that almost as soon as we descried the apparent peril, it was passed. In less than ten minutes, as it seemed to me, we had left the roar of the rapids behind us, and were gliding over the smooth water at their foot.

In the afternoon we engaged a half-breed and his brother to take us over to the Canadian shore. His wife, a slender young woman with a lively physiognomy, not easily to be distinguished from a French woman of her class, accompanied us in the canoe with her little boy. The birch-bark canoe of the savage seems to me one of the most beautiful and perfect things of the kind constructed by human art. 282 We were in one of the finest that float on St. Mary's river, and when I looked at its delicate ribs, mere shavings of white cedar, yet firm enough for the purpose—the thin broad laths of the same wood with which these are inclosed, and the broad sheets of birch-bark, impervious to water, which sheathed the outside, all firmly sewed together by the tough slender roots of the fir-tree, and when I considered its extreme lightness and the grace of its form, I could not but wonder at the ingenuity of those who had invented so beautiful a combination of ship-building and basket-work. “It cost me twenty dollars,” said the half-breed, “and I would not take thirty for it.”

We were ferried over the waves where they dance at the foot of the rapids. At this place large quantities of white-fish, one of the most delicate kinds known on our continent, are caught by the Indians, in their season, with scoop-nets. The whites are about to interfere with this occupation of the Indians, and I saw the other day a seine of prodigious length

Library of Congress

constructing, with which it is intended to sweep nearly half the river at once. "They will take a hundred barrels a day," said an inhabitant of the place.

On the British side, the rapids divide themselves into half a dozen noisy brooks, which roar round little islands, and in the boiling pools of which the speckled trout is caught with the rod and line. We landed at the warehouses of the Hudson Bay Company, where the goods intended for the Indian trade are deposited, and the furs brought from the 283 northwest are collected. They are surrounded by a massive stockade, within which lives the agent of the Company, the walks are gravelled and well-kept, and the whole bears the marks of British solidity and precision. A quantity of furs had been brought in the day before, but they were locked up in the warehouse, and all was now quiet and silent. The agent was absent; a half-breed nurse stood at the door with his child, and a Scotch servant, apparently with nothing to do, was lounging in the court inclosed by the stockade; in short, there was less bustle about this centre of one of the most powerful trading-companies in the world, than about one of our farm-houses.

Crossing the bay, at the bottom of which these buildings stand, we landed at a Canadian village of half-breeds. Here were one or two wigwams and a score of log-cabins, some of which we entered. In one of them we were received with great appearance of deference by a woman of decidedly Indian features, but light-complexioned, barefoot, with blue embroidered leggings falling over her ankles and sweeping the floor, the only peculiarity of Indian costume about her. The house was as clean as scouring could make it, and her two little children, with little French physiognomies, were fairer than many children of the European race. These people are descended from the French voyageurs and settlers on one side; they speak Canadian French more or less, but generally employ the Chippewa language in their intercourse with each other.

284

Near at hand was a burial ground, with graves of the Indians and half-breeds, which we entered. Some of the graves were covered with a low roof of cedar-bark, others with a

Library of Congress

wooden box; over others was placed a little house like a dog-kennel, except that it had no door, others were covered with little log-cabins. One of these was of such a size that a small Indian family would have found it amply large for their accommodation. It is a practice among the savages to protect the graves of the dead from the wolves, by stakes driven into the ground and meeting at the top like the rafters of a roof; and perhaps when the Indian or half-breed exchanged his wigwam for a log-cabin, his respect for the dead led him to make the same improvement in the architecture of their narrow houses. At the head of most of these monuments stood wooden crosses, for the population here is principally Roman Catholic, some of them inscribed with the names of the dead, not always accurately spelled.

Not far from the church stands a building, regarded by the half-breeds as a wonder of architecture, the stone house, *la maison de pierre*, as they call it, a large mansion built of stone by a former agent of the Northwest or Hudson Bay Company, who lived here in a kind of grand manorial style, with his servants and horses and hounds, and gave hospitable dinners in those days when it was the fashion for the host to do his best to drink his guests under the table. The old splendor of the place has departed, its gardens are overgrown with grass, the barn has been blown down, the 285 kitchen in which so many grand dinners were cooked consumed by fire, and the mansion, with its broken and patched windows, is now occupied by a Scotch farmer of the name of Wilson.

We climbed a ridge of hills back of the house to the church of the Episcopal Mission, built a few years ago as a place of worship for the Chippewas, who have since been removed by the government. It stands remote from any habitation, with three or four Indian graves near it, and we found it filled with hay. The view from its door is uncommonly beautiful; the broad St. Mary lying below, with its bordering villages and woody valley, its white rapids and its rocky islands, picturesque with the pointed summits of the fir-tree. To the northwest the sight followed the river to the horizon, where it issued from Lake Superior,

and I was told that in clear weather one might discover, from the spot on which I stood, the promontory of Gros Cap, which guards the outlet of that mighty lake.

The country around was smoking in a dozen places with fires in the woods. When I returned I asked who kindled them. "It is old Tanner," said one, "the man who murdered Schoolcraft." There is great fear here of Tanner, who is thought to be lurking yet in the neighborhood. I was going the other day to look at a view of the place from an eminence, reached by a road passing through a swamp, full of larches and firs. "Are you not afraid of Tanner?" I was asked. Mrs. Schoolcraft, since the 286 assassination of her husband, has come to live in the fort, which consists of barracks protected by a high stockade. It is rumored that Tanner has been seen skulking about within a day or two, and yesterday a place was discovered which is supposed to have served for his retreat. It was a hollow, thickly surrounded by shrubs, which some person had evidently made his habitation for a considerable time. There is a dispute whether this man is insane or not, but there is no dispute as to his malignity. He has threatened to take the life of Mr. Bingham, the venerable Baptist missionary at this place, and as long as it is not certain that he has left the neighborhood a feeling of insecurity prevails. Nevertheless, as I know no reason why this man should take it into his head to shoot me, I go whither I list, without the fear of Tanner before my eyes.

287

LETTER XXXVI. INDIANS AT THE SAULT.

Mackinaw, *August* 19, 1846.

We were detained two days longer than we expected at the Sault de Ste. Marie, by the failure of the Steamer General Scott to depart at the proper time. If we could have found a steamer going up Lake Superior, we should most certainly have quieted our impatience at this delay, by embarking on board of her. But the only steamer in the river St. Mary, above the falls, which is a sort of arm or harbor of Lake Superior, was the Julia Palmer, and she

Library of Congress

was lying aground in the pebbles and sand of the shore. She had just been dragged over the portage which passes round the falls, where a broad path, with hillocks flattened, and trunks hewn off close to the surface, gave tokens of the vast bulk that had been moved over it. The moment she touched the water, she stuck fast, and the engineer was obliged to go to Cleveland for additional machinery to move her forward. He had just arrived with the proper apparatus, and the steamer had begun to work its way slowly into the deep water; but some days must yet elapse before she can float, and after that the engine must be put together.

288

Had the Julia Palmer been ready to proceed up the lake, I should certainly have seized the occasion to be present at an immense assemblage of Indians on Madeleine Island. This island lies far in the lake, near its remoter extremity. On one of its capes, called La Pointe, is a missionary station and an Indian village, and here the savages are gathering in vast numbers to receive their annual payments from the United States.

“There were already two thousand of them at La Pointe when I left the place,” said an intelligent gentleman who had just returned from the lake, “and they were starving. If an Indian family has a stock of provisions on hand sufficient for a month, it is sure to eat it up in a week, and the Indians at La Pointe had already consumed all they had provided, and were living on what they could shoot in the woods, or get by fishing in the lake.”

I inquired of him the probable number of Indians the occasion would bring together.

“Seven thousand,” he answered. “Among them are some of the wildest tribes on the continent, whose habits have been least changed by the neighborhood of the white man. A new tribe will come in who never before would have any transactions with the government. They are called the Pillagers, a fierce and warlike race, proud of their independence, and, next to the Blackfeet and the Camanches, the most ferocious and formidable tribe within

Library of Congress

the territory of the United States. They inhabit the 289 country about Red River and the head-waters of the Mississippi.”

I was further told that some of the Indian traders had expressed their determination to disregard the law, set up their tents at La Pointe, and sell spirits to the savages. “If they do, knives will be drawn,” was the common saying at the Sault; and at the Fort, I learned that a requisition had arrived from La Pointe for twenty men to enforce the law and prevent disorder. “We can not send half the number,” said the officer who commanded at the Fort, “we have but twelve men in all; the rest of the garrison have been ordered to the Mexican frontier, and it is necessary that somebody should remain to guard the public property.” The call for troops has since been transferred to the garrison at Mackinaw, from which they will be sent.

I learned afterward from an intelligent lady of the half-caste at the Sault, that letters had arrived, from which it appeared that more than four thousand Indians were already assembled at La Pointe, and that their stock of provisions was exhausted.

“They expected,” said the lady, “to be paid off on the 15th of August, but the government has changed the time to nearly a month later. This is unfortunate for the Indians, for now is the time of their harvest, the season for gathering wild rice in the marshes, and they must, in consequence, not only suffer with hunger now, but in the winter also.”

290

In a stroll which we made through the Indian village, situated close to the rapids, we fell in with a half-breed, a sensible-looking man, living in a log cabin, whose boys, the offspring of a squaw of the pure Indian race, were practicing with their bows and arrows. “You do not go to La Pointe?” we asked. “It is too far to go for a blanket,” was his answer—he spoke tolerable English. This man seemed to have inherited from the white side of his ancestry somewhat of the love of a constant habitation, for a genuine Indian has no particular dislike to a distant journey. He takes his habitation with him, and is at

Library of Congress

home wherever there is game and fish, and poles with which to construct his lodge. In a further conversation with the half-breed, he spoke of the Sault as a delightful abode, and expatiated on the pleasures of the place.

"It is the greatest place in the world for fun," said he; "we dance all winter; our women are all good dancers; our little girls can dance single and double jigs as good as any body in the States. That little girl there," pointing to a long-haired girl at the door, "will dance as good as any body."

The fusion of the two races in this neighborhood is remarkable; the mixed breed running by gradual shades into the aboriginal on the one hand, and into the white on the other; children with a tinge of the copper hue in the families of white men, and children scarcely less fair sometimes seen in the wigwams. Some of the half-caste ladies at the 291 Falls of St. Mary, who have been educated in the Atlantic states, are persons of graceful and dignified manners and agreeable conversation.

I attended worship at the Fort, at the Sault, on Sunday. The services were conducted by the chaplain, who is of the Methodist persuasion and a missionary at the place, assisted by the Baptist missionary. I looked about me for some evidence of the success of their labors, but among the worshippers I saw not one male of Indian descent. Of the females, half a dozen, perhaps, were of the half-caste; and as two of these walked away from the church, I perceived that they wore a fringed clothing for the ankles, as if they took a certain pride in this badge of their Indian extraction.

In the afternoon we drove down the west bank of the river to attend religious service at an Indian village, called the Little Rapids, about two miles and a half from the Sault. Here the Methodists have built a mission-house, maintain a missionary, and instruct a fragment of the Chippewa tribe. We found the missionary, Mr. Speight, a Kentuckian, who has wandered to this northern region, quite ill, and there was consequently no service.

We walked through the village, which is prettily situated on a swift and deep channel of the St. Mary, where the green waters rush between the main-land and a wooded island. It stands on rich meadows of the river, with a path running before it, parallel with the bank, along the velvet sward, and backed at no great distance by the thick original 292 forest, which not far below closes upon the river on both sides. The inhabitants at the doors and windows of their log-cabins had a demure and subdued aspect; they were dressed in their clean Sunday clothes, and the peace and quiet of the place formed a strong contrast to the debaucheries we had witnessed at the village by the Falls. We fell in with an Indian, a quiet little man, of very decent appearance, who answered our questions with great civility. We asked to whom belonged the meadows lying back of the cabins, on which we saw patches of rye, oats, and potatoes.

“Oh, they belong to the mission; the Indians work them.”

“Are they good people, these Indians?”

“Oh yes, good people.”

“Do they never drink too much whisky?”

“Well, I guess they drink too much whisky sometimes.”

There was a single wigwam in the village, apparently a supplement to one of the log-cabins. We looked in and saw two Indian looms, from which two unfinished mats were depending. Mrs. Speight, the wife of the missionary, told us that, a few days before, the village had been full of these lodges; that the Indians delighted in them greatly, and always put them up during the mosquito season; “for a mosquito,” said the good lady, “will never enter a wigwam;” and that lately, the mosquitoes having disappeared, and the nights having grown cooler, they had taken down all but the one we saw.

Library of Congress

We passed a few minutes in the house of the missionary, to which Mrs. Speight kindly invited us. She gave a rather favorable account of the Indians under her husband's charge, but manifestly an honest one, and without any wish to extenuate the defects of their character.

"There are many excellent persons among them," she said; "they are a kind, simple, honest people, and some of them are eminently pious."

"Do they follow any regular industry?"

"Many of them are as regularly industrious as the whites, rising early and continuing at their work in the a fields all day. They are not so, attentive as we could wish to the education of their children. It is difficult to make them send their children regularly to school; they think they confer a favor in allowing us to instruct them, and if they happen to take a little offence their children are kept at home. The great evil against which we have to guard is the love of strong drink. When this is offered to an Indian, it seems as if it was not in his nature to resist the temptation. I have known whole congregations of Indians, good Indians, ruined and brought to nothing by the opportunity of obtaining whisky as often as they pleased."

We inquired whether the numbers of the people at the mission were diminishing. She could not speak with much certainty as to this point, having been only a year and a half at the mission, but she thought there was a gradual decrease. 15*

294

"The families of the Indians," she said, in answer to one of my questions, "are small. In one family at the village are six children, and it is the talk of all the Indians, far and near, as something extraordinary. Generally the number is much smaller, and more than half the children die in infancy. Their means would not allow them to rear many children, even if the number of births was greater."

Such appears to be the destiny of the red race while in the presence of the white—decay and gradual extinction, even under circumstances apparently the most favorable to its preservation.

On Monday we left the Falls of St. Mary, in the steamer General Scott, on our return to Mackinaw. There were about forty passengers on board, men in search of copper-mines, and men in search of health, and travellers from curiosity, Virginians, New Yorkers, wanderers from Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, and I believe several other states. On reaching Mackinaw in the evening, our party took quarters in the Mansion House, the obliging host of which stretched his means to the utmost for our accommodation. Mackinaw is at the present moment crowded with strangers; attracted by the cool healthful climate and the extreme beauty of the place. We were packed for the night almost as closely as the Potawottamies, whose lodges were on the beach before us. Parlors and garrets were turned into sleeping-rooms; beds were made on the floors 295 and in the passages, and double-bedded rooms were made to receive four beds. It is no difficult feat to sleep at Mackinaw, even in an August night, and we soon forgot, in a refreshing slumber, the narrowness of our quarters.

296

LETTER XXXVII. THE ISLAND OF MACKINAW.

Steamer St. Louis, Lake Huron, *August 20*, 1846.

Yesterday evening we left the beautiful island of Mackinaw, after a visit of two days delightfully passed. We had climbed its cliffs, rambled on its shores, threaded the walks among its thickets, driven out in the roads that wind through its woods—roads paved by nature with limestone pebbles, a sort of natural macadamization, and the time of our departure seemed to arrive several days too soon.

Library of Congress

The fort which crowns the heights near the shore commands an extensive prospect, but a still wider one is to be seen from the old fort, Fort Holmes, as it is called, among whose ruined intrenchments the half-breed boys and girls now gather gooseberries. It stands on the very crest of the of the island, overlooking all the rest. The air, when we ascended it, was loaded with the smoke of burning forests, but from this spot, in clear weather, I was told a magnificent view might be had of the Straits of Mackinaw, the wooded islands, and the shores and capes of the great mainland, places known to history for the past two centuries. 297 For when you are at Mackinaw you are at no new settlement.

In looking for samples of Indian embroidery with porcupine quills, we found ourselves one day in the warehouse of the American Fur Company, at Mackinaw. Here, on the shelves, were piles of blankets, white and blue, red scarfs, and white boots; snow-shoes were hanging on the walls, and wolf-traps, rifles, and hatchets, were slung to the ceiling—an assortment of goods destined for the Indians and half-breeds of the northwest. The person who attended at the counter spoke English with a foreign accent. I asked him how long he had been in the northwestern country.

“To say the truth,” he answered, “I have been here sixty years and some days.”

“You were born here, then.”

“I am a native of Mackinaw, French by the mother's side; my father was an Englishman.”

“Was the place as considerable sixty years ago as it now is?”

“More so. There was more trade here, and quite as many inhabitants. All the houses, or nearly all, were then built; two or three only have been put up since.”

I could easily imagine that Mackinaw must have been a place of consequence when here was the centre of the fur trade, now removed further up the country. I was shown the large house in which the heads of the companies of *voyageurs* engaged in the

Library of Congress

trade were lodged, and the barracks, 298 a long low building, in which the *voyageurs* themselves, seven hundred in number, made their quarters from the end of June till the beginning of October, when they went out again on their journeys. This interval of three months was a merry time with those light-hearted Frenchmen. When a boat made its appearance approaching Mackinaw, they fell to conjecturing to what company of *voyageurs* it belonged; as the dispute grew warm the conjectures became bets, till finally, unable to restrain their impatience, the boldest of them dashed into the waters, swam out to the boat, and climbing on board, shook hands with their brethren, amidst the shouts of those who stood on the beach.

They talk, on the New England coast, of Chebacco boats, built after a peculiar pattern, and called after Chebacco, an ancient settlement of sea-faring men, who have foolishly changed the old Indian name of their place to Ipswich. The Mackinaw navigators have also given their name to a boat of peculiar form, sharp at both ends, swelled at the sides, and flat-bottomed, an excellent sea-boat, it is said, as it must be to live in the wild storms that surprise the mariner on Lake Superior.

We took yesterday a drive to the western shore. The road twined through a wood of over-arching beeches and maples, interspersed with the white-cedar and fir. The driver stopped before a cliff sprouting with beeches and cedars, with a small cavity at the foot. This he told us was the Skull Cave. It is only remarkable on account of 299 human bones having been found in it. Further on a white paling gleamed through the trees; it inclosed the solitary burial ground of the garrison, with half a dozen graves. "There are few buried here," said a gentleman of our party; "the soldiers who come to Mackinaw sick get well soon."

The road we travelled was cut through the woods by Captain Scott, who commanded at the fort a few years since. He is the marksman whose aim was so sure that the western people say of him, that a raccoon on a tree once offered to come down and surrender without giving him the trouble to fire.

Library of Congress

We passed a farm surrounded with beautiful groves. In one of its meadows was fought the battle between Colonel Croghan and the British officer Holmes in the war of 1813 Three luxuriant beeches stand in the edge of the wood, north of the meadow; one of them is the monument of Holmes; he lies buried at its root. Another quarter of a mile led us to a little bay on the solitary shore of the lake looking to the northwest. It is called the British Landing, because the British troops landed here in the late war to take possession of the island.

We wandered about awhile, and then sat down upon the embankment of pebbles which the waves of the lake, heaving for centuries, have heaped around the shore, of the island—pebbles so clean that they would no more soil a lady's white muslin gown than if they had been of newly 300 polished alabaster. The water at our feet was as transparent as the air around us. On the main-land opposite stood a church with its spire, and several roofs were visible, with a background of woods behind them.

“There,” said one of our party, “is the old Mission Church. It was built by the Catholics in 1680, and has been a place of worship ever since. The name of the spot is Point St. Ignace, and there lives an Indian of the full caste, who was sent to Rome and educated to be a priest, but he preferred the life of a layman, and there he lives on that wild shore, with a library in his lodge, a learned savage, occupied with reading and study.”

You may well suppose that I felt a strong desire to see Point St. Ignace, its venerable Mission Church, its Indian village, so long under the care of Catholic pastors, and its learned savage who talks Italian, but the time of my departure was already fixed. My companions were pointing out on that shore, the mouth of Carp River, which comes down through the forest roaring over rocks, and in any of the pools of which you have only to throw a line, with any sort of bait, to be sure of a trout, when the driver of our vehicle called out, “Your boat is coming.” We looked and saw the St. Louis steamer, not one of the largest, but one of the finest boats in the line between Buffalo and Chicago, making rapidly for the island, with a train of black smoke hanging in the air behind her. We hastened

Library of Congress

to return through the woods, and in an hour and a half we were in 301 our clean and comfortable quarters in this well-ordered little steamer.

But I should mention that before leaving Mackinaw, we did not fail to visit the principal curiosities of the place, the Sugar Loaf Rock, a remarkable rock in the middle of the island, of a sharp conical form, rising above the trees by which it is surrounded, and lifting the stunted birches on its shoulders higher than they, like a tall fellow holding up a little boy to overlook a crowd of men—and the Arched Rock on the shore. The atmosphere was thick with smoke, and through the opening spanned by the arch of the rock I saw the long waves, rolled up by a fresh wind, come one after another out of the obscurity, and break with roaring on the beach.

The path along the brow of the precipice and among the evergreens, by which this rock is reached, is singularly wild, but another which leads to it along the shore is no less picturesque—passing under impending cliffs and overshadowing cedars, and between huge blocks and pinnacles of rock.

I spoke in one of my former letters of the manifest fate of Mackinaw, which is to be a watering-place. I can not see how it is to escape this destiny. People already begin to repair to it for health and refreshment from the southern borders of Lake Michigan. Its climate during the summer months is delightful; there is no air more pure and elastic, and the winds of the outh and southwest, which are so hot 26 302 on the prairies, arrive here tempered to a grateful coolness by the waters over which they have swept. The nights are always, in the hottest season, agreeably cool, and the health of the place is proverbial. The world has not many islands so beautiful as Mackinaw, as you may judge from the description I have already given of parts of it. The surface is singularly irregular, with summits of rock and pleasant hollows, open glades of pasturage and shady nooks. To some, the savage visitors, who occasionally set up their lodges on its beach, as well as on that of the surrounding islands, and paddle their canoes in its waters, will be an additional attraction. I can not but think with a kind of regret on the time which, I suppose is near

at hand, when its wild and lonely woods will be intersected with highways, and filled with cottages and boarding-houses.

303

LETTER XXXVIII. AN EXCURSION TO THE WATER GAP.

Stroudsburg, Monroe Co., Penn. *October* 23, 1846.

I Reached this place last evening, having taken Easton in my way. Did it ever occur to you, in passing through New Jersey, how much the northern part of the state is, in some respects, like New York, and much the southern part resembles Pennsylvania? For twenty miles before reaching Easton, you see spacious dwelling-houses, often of stone, substantially built, and barns of the size of churches, and large farms with extensive woods of tall trees, as in Pennsylvania, where the right of soil has not undergone so many subdivisions as with us. I was shown in Warren county, in a region apparently of great fertility, a farm which was said to be two miles square. It belonged to a farmer of German origin, whose comfortable mansion stood by the way, and who came into the state many years ago, a young man.

"I have heard him say," said a passenger, "that when his father brought him out with his young wife into Warren county, and set him down upon what then appeared a barren little farm, now a part of his large and productive 304 estate, his heart failed him. However he went to work industriously, practicing the strictest economy, and by applying lime copiously to the soil made it highly fertile. It is lime which makes this region the richest land in New Jersey; the farmers find limestone close at hand, burn it in their kilns, and scatter it on the surface. The person of whom I speak took off large crops from his little farm, and as soon as he had any money beforehand, he added a few acres more, so that it gradually grew to its present size. Rich as he is, he is a worthy man; his sons, who are numerous, are all fine fellows, not a scape-grace among them, and he has settled them all on farms around him."

Library of Congress

Easton, which we entered soon after dark, is a pretty little town of seven thousand inhabitants, much more substantially built than towns of the same size in this country. Many of the houses are of stone, and to the sides of some of them you see the ivy clinging and hiding the masonry with a veil of evergreen foliage. The middle of the streets is unpaved and very dusty, but the broad flagging on the sides, under the windows of the houses, is sedulously swept. The situation of the place is uncommonly picturesque. If ever the little borough of Easton shall grow into a great town, it will stand on one of the most commanding sites in the world, unless its inhabitants shall have spoiled it by improvements. The Delaware, which forms the eastern bound of the borough, approaches it from the north through high wooded banks, and flows away to join the Schuylkill 305 between craggy precipices. On the south side, the Lehigh comes down through a deep, verdant hollow, and on the north the Bushkill winds through a glen shaded with trees, on the rocky banks of which is one of the finest drives in the world. In the midst of the borough rises a crag as lofty as that on which Stirling Castle is built—in Europe, it would most certainly have been crowned with its castle; steep and grassy on one side, and precipitous and rocky on the other, where it overhangs the Bushkill. The college stands on a lofty eminence, overlooking the dwellings and streets, but it is an ugly building, and has not a tree to conceal even in part its ugliness. Besides these, are various other eminences in the immediate vicinity of this compact little town, which add greatly to its beauty.

We set out the next morning for the Delaware Water Gap, following the road along the Delaware, which is here uncommonly beautiful. The steep bank is mostly covered with trees sprouting from the rocky shelves, and below is a fringe of trees between the road and the river. A little way from the town, the driver pointed out, in the midst of the stream, a long island of loose stones and pebbles, without a leaf or stem of herbage.

“It was there,” said he, “that Gaetter, six years ago, was hanged for the murder of his wife.”

The high and steep bank of the river, the rocks and the trees, he proceeded to tell us, were covered on that day with eager spectators from all the surrounding country, every one 26*

Library of Congress

306 of whom, looking immediately down on the island, could enjoy a perfect view of the process by which the poor wretch in the hands of the hangman was turned off.

About five miles from Easton we stopped to water our horses at an inn, a large handsome stone house, with a chatty landlord, who spoke with a strong German accent, complaining pathetically of the potato disease, which had got into the fields of the neighborhood, but glorying in the abundant crops of maize and wheat which had been gathered. Two miles further on, we turned away from the river and ascended to the table-land above, which we found green with extensive fields of wheat, just springing under the autumnal sun. In one of the little villages nestling in the hollows of that region, we stopped for a few moments, and fell into conversation with a tolerably intelligent man, though speaking English with some peculiarities that indicated the race to which he belonged. A sample of his dialect may amuse you. We asked him what the people in that part of the country thought of the new tariff.

“Oh,” said he, “there are different obinions, some likes it and some not.”

“How do the democrats take it?”

“The democratic in brinciple likes it.”

“Did it have any effect on the election?”

“It brevented a goot many democrats from voting for their candidate for Congress, Mr. Brodhead, because he is 307 for the old tariff. This is a very strong democratic district, and Mr. Brodhead's majority is only about a sousand.”

A little beyond this village we came in sight of the Water Gap, where the Blue Ridge has been cloven down to its base to form a passage for the Delaware. Two lofty summits, black with precipices of rock, form the gates through which the river issues into the open country. Here it runs noisily over the shallows, as if boasting aloud of the victory it had

Library of Congress

achieved in breaking its way through such mighty barriers; but within the Gap it sleeps in quiet pools, or flows in deep glassy currents. By the side of these you see large rafts composed of enormous trunks of trees that have floated down with the spring floods from the New York forests, and here wait for their turn in the saw-mills along the shore. It was a bright morning, with a keen autumnal air, and we dismounted from our vehicle and walked through the Gap.

It will give your readers an idea of the Water Gap, to say that it consists of a succession of lofty peaks, like the Highlands of the Hudson, with a winding and irregular space between them a few rods wide, to give passage to the river. They are unlike the Highlands, however, in one respect, that their sides are covered with large loose blocks detached from the main precipices. Among these grows the original forest, which descends to their foot, fringes the river, and embowers the road.

The present autumn is, must, say; in regard to the 308 coloring of the forests, one of the shabbiest and least brilliant I remember to have seen in this country, almost as sallow and dingy in its hues as an autumn in Europe. But here in the Water Gap it was not without some of its accustomed brightness of tints—the sugar-maple with its golden leaves, and the water-maple with its foliage of scarlet, contrasted with the intense green of the hemlock-fir, the pine, the rosebay-laurel, and the mountain-laurel, which here grow in the same thicket, while the ground below was carpeted with humbler evergreens, the aromatic wintergreen, and the trailing arbutus. The Water Gap is about a mile in length, and near its northern entrance an excellent hotel, the resort of summer visitors, stands on a cliff which rises more than a hundred feet almost perpendicularly from the river. From this place the eye follows the Water Gap to where mountains shut in one behind another, like the teeth of a saw, and between them the Delaware twines out of sight.

Before the hotel a fine little boy of about two years of age was at play. The landlord showed us on the calf of the child's leg two small lurid spots, about a quarter of an inch apart. "That," said he, "is the bite of a copperhead snake."

Library of Congress

We asked when this happened.

“It was last summer,” answered he; “the child was playing on the side of the road, when he was heard to cry, and seen to make for the house. As soon as he came, my 309 wife called my attention to what she called a scratch on his leg. I examined it, the spot was already purple and hard, and the child was crying violently. I knew it to be the bite of a copper-head, and immediately cut it open with a sharp knife, making the blood to flow freely and washing the part with water. At the same time we got a yerb” (such was his pronunciation) “on the hills, which some call lion-heart, and others snake-head. We steeped this yerb in milk which we made him drink. The doctor had been sent for, and when he came applied hartshorn; but I believe that opening the wound and letting the blood flow was the most effectual remedy. The leg was terribly swollen, and for ten days we thought the little fellow in great danger, but after that he became better and finally recovered.”

“How do you know that it was a copper-head that bit him?”

“We sent to the place where he was at play, found the snake, and killed it. A violent rain had fallen just before, and it had probably washed him down from the mountain-side.”

“The boy appears very healthy now.”

“Much better than before; he was formerly delicate, and troubled with an eruption, but that has disappeared, and he has become hardy and fond of the open air.”

We dined at the hotel and left the Water Gap. As we passed out of its jaws we met a man in a little wagon, carrying behind him the carcass of a deer he had just killed. 310 They are hunted, at this time of the year, and killed in considerable numbers in the extensive forests to the north of this place. A drive of four miles over hill and valley brought us to Stroudsburg, on the banks of the Pocano—a place of which I shall speak in my next letter.

LETTER XXXIX. AN EXCURSION TO THE WATER GAP.

Easton, Penn., *October 24, 1846.*

My yesterday's letter left me at Stroudsburg, about four miles west of the Delaware. It is a pleasant village, situated on the banks of the Pocano. From this stream the inhabitants have diverted a considerable portion of the water, bringing the current through this village in a canal, making it to dive under the road and rise again on the opposite side, after which it hastens to turn a cluster of mills. To the north is seen the summit of the Pocano mountain, where this stream has its springs, with woods stretching down its sides and covering the adjacent country. Here, about nine miles to the north of the village, deer haunt and are hunted. I heard of one man who had already killed nine of these animals within two or three weeks. A traveller from Wyoming county, whom I met at our inn, gave me some account of the winter life of the deer.

"They inhabit," he said, "the swamps of mountain-laurel, thickets through which a man would find it almost impossible to make his way. The laurel-bushes, and the hemlocks 312 scattered among them, intercept the snow as it falls, and form a thick roof, under the shelter of which, near some pool or rivulet, the animals remain until spring opens, as snugly protected from the severity of the weather as sheep under the sheds of a farm-yard. Here they feed upon the leaves of the laurel and other evergreens. It is contrary to the law to kill them after the Christmas holidays, but sometimes their retreat is invaded, and a deer or two killed; their flesh, however, is not wholesome, on account of the laurel leaves on which they feed, and their skin is nearly worthless."

I expressed my surprise that the leaves of the mountain laurel, the *kalmia latifolia*, which are so deadly to sheep, should be the winter food of the deer.

Library of Congress

"It is because the deer has no gall," answered the man, "that the pison don't take effect, But their meat will not do to eat, except in a small quantity, and cooked with pork, which I think helps take the pison out of it."

"The deer," he went on to say, "are now passing out of the blue into the gray. After the holidays, when their hair becomes long, and their winter coat is quite grown, their hide is soft and tender, and tears easily when dressed, and it would be folly to kill them, even if there were no law against it." He went on to find a parallel to the case of the deer-skins in the hides of neat-cattle, which, when brought from a hot country, like South America, are firmer and tougher than when obtained in a colder climate like ours.

The Wyoming traveller gave a bad account of the health, 313 just at present, of the beautiful valley in which he lived, "We have never before," said he, "known what it was to have the fever and ague among us, but now it is very common, as well as other fevers. The season has neither been uncommonly wet nor uncommonly dry, but it has been uncommonly hot." I heard the same account of various other districts in Pennsylvania. Mifflin county, for example, was sickly this season, as well as other parts of the state which hitherto have been almost uniformly healthy. Here, however, in Stroudsburg and its neighborhood, they boasted that the fever and ague had never yet made its appearance.

I was glad to hear a good account of the pecuniary circumstances of the Pennsylvania farmers. They got in debt like every body else during the prosperous years of 1835 and 1836, and have been ever since working themselves gradually out of it. "I have never," said an intelligent gentleman of Stroudsburg, "known the owners of the farms so free from debt, and so generally easy and prosperous in their condition, as at this moment." It is to be hoped that having been so successful in paying their private debts, they will now try what can be done with the debt of the state.

We left Stroudsburg this morning—one of the finest mornings of this autumnal season—and soon climbed an eminence which looked down upon Cherry Hollow. This place

Library of Congress

reminded me, with the exception of its forests, of the valleys in the Peak of Derbyshire, the same rounded 27 314 summits, the same green, basin-like hollows. But here, on the hill-sides, were tall groves of oak and chestnut, instead of the brown heath; and the large stone houses of the German householders were very unlike the Derbyshire cottages. The valley is four miles in length, and its eastern extremity is washed by the Delaware. Climbing out of this valley and passing for some miles through yellow woods and fields of springing corn, not Indian corn, we found ourselves at length travelling on the side of another long valley, which terminates at its southern extremity in the Wind Gap.

The Wind Gap is an opening in the same mountain ridge which is cloven by the Water Gap, but, unlike that, it extends only about half-way down to the base. Through this opening, bordered on each side by large loose blocks of stone, the road passes. After you have reached the open country beyond, you look back and see the ridge stretching away eastward towards the Water Gap, and in the other direction towards the southwest till it sinks out of sight, a rocky wall of uniform height, with this opening in the midst, which looks as if part of the mountain had here fallen into an abyss below. Beyond the Wind Gap we came to the village of Windham, lying in the shelter of this mountain barrier, and here, about twelve o'clock, our driver stopped a moment at an inn to give water to his horses. The bar-room was full of fresh-colored young men in military uniforms, talking Pennsylvania German rather rapidly and vociferously. They surrounded a thick-set man, in a cap 315 and shirt-sleeves, whom they called Tscho, or Joe, and insisted that he should give them a tune on his fiddle.

“Spiel, Tscho, spiel, spiel,” was shouted on every side, and at last Tscho took the floor with a fiddle and began to play. About a dozen of the young men stood up on the floor, in couples, facing each other, and hammered out the tune with their feet, giving a tread or tap on the floor to correspond with every note of the instrument, and occasionally crossing from side to side. I have never seen dancing more diligently performed.

Library of Congress

When the player had drawn the final squeak from his violin, we got into our vehicle, and in somewhat more than an hour were entering the little village of Nazareth, pleasantly situated among fields the autumnal verdure of which indicated their fertility. Nazareth is a Moravian village, of four or five hundred inhabitants, looking prodigiously like a little town of the old world, except that it is more neatly kept. The houses are square and solid, of stone or brick, built immediately on the street; a pavement of broad flags runs under their windows, and between the flags and the carriage-way is a row of trees. In the centre of the village is a square with an arcade for a market, and a little aside from the main street, in a hollow covered with bright green grass, is another square, in the midst of which stands a large white church. Near it is an avenue, with two immense lime-trees growing at the gate, leading to the field in which they bury their dead. Looking upon this 316 square is a large building, three or four stories high, where a school for boys is kept, to which pupils are sent from various parts of the country, and which enjoys a very good reputation. We entered the garden of this school, an inclosure thickly overshadowed with tall forest and exotic trees of various kinds, with shrubs below, and winding walks and summer-houses and benches. The boys of the school were amusing themselves under the trees, and the arched walks were ringing with their shrill voices.

We visited also the burying place, which is situated on a little eminence, backed with a wood, and commands a view of the village. The Moravian grave is simple in its decorations; a small flat stone, of a square shape, lying in the midst, between the head and foot, is inscribed with the name of the dead, the time and place of his birth, and the time when, to use their own language, he “departed,” and this is the sole epitaph. But innovations have been recently made on this simplicity; a rhyming couplet or quatrain is now sometimes added, or a word in praise of the dead. One recent grave was loaded with a thick tablet of white marble, which covered it entirely, and bore an inscription as voluminous as those in the burial places of other denominations. The graves, as in all Moravian burying grounds, are arranged in regular rows, with paths at right angles between them, and sometimes a rose-tree is planted at the head of the sleeper.

As we were leaving Nazareth, the innkeeper came to us, and asked if we would allow a man who was travelling to Easton to take a seat in our carriage with the driver. We consented, and a respectable-looking, well-clad, middle-aged person, made his appearance. When we had proceeded a little way, We asked him some questions, to which he made no other reply than to shake his head, and we soon found that he understood no English. I tried him with German, which brought a ready reply in the same language. He was a native of Pennsylvania, he told me, born at Snow Hill, in Lehigh county, not very many miles from Nazareth. In turn, he asked me where I came from, and when I bid him guess, he assigned my birthplace to Germany, which showed at least that he was not very accurately instructed in the diversities with which his mother tongue is spoken.

As we entered Easton, the yellow woods on the hills and peaks that surround the place, were lit up with a glowing autumnal sunset. Soon afterward we crossed the Lehigh, and took a walk along its bank in South Easton, where a little town has recently grown up; the sidewalks along its dusty streets were freshly swept for Saturday night. As it began to grow dark, we found ourselves strolling in front of a row of iron mills, with the canal on one side and the Lehigh on the other. One of these was a rolling mill, into which we could look from the bank where we stood, and observe the whole process of the manufacture, which is very striking. 27*

The whole interior of the building is lighted at night only by the mouths of several furnaces, which are kindled to a white heat. Out of one of these a thick bar of iron, about six feet in length and heated to a perfect whiteness, is drawn, and one end of it presented to the cylinders of the mill, which seize it and draw it through between them, rolled out to three or four times its original size. A sooty workman grasps the opposite end of the bar with pincers as soon as it is fairly through, and returns it again to the cylinders, which deliver it again on the opposite side. In this way it passes backward and forward till it is rolled into

Library of Congress

an enormous length, and shoots across the black floor with a twining motion like a serpent of fire. At last, when pressed to the proper thinness and length, it is coiled up into a circle by the help of a machine contrived for the purpose, which rolls it up as a shopkeeper rolls up a ribbon.

We found a man near where we stood, begrimed by the soot of, the furnaces, handling the clumsy masses of iron which bear the name of bloom. The rolling mill, he said, belonged to Rodenbough, Stewart & Co., who had very extensive contracts for furnishing iron to the nailmakers and wire manufacturers.

“Will they stop the mill for the new tariff?.” said I.

“They will stop for nothing,” replied the man. “The new tariff is a good tariff, if people would but think so. It costs the iron-masters fifteen dollars a ton to make their iron, and they sell it for forty dollars a ton. If the new 319 tariff obliges them to sell it for considerable less they will still make money.”

So revolves the cycle of opinion. Twenty years ago a Pennsylvanian who questioned the policy of the protective system would have been looked upon as a sort of curiosity. Now the bloomers and stable-boys begin to talk free trade. What will they talk twenty years hence?

320

LETTER XL. BOSTON.—LAWRENCE.—PORTLAND.

Portland, *July* 31, 1847.

I Left Boston for this place, a few days since, by one of the railways. I never come to Boston or go out of it without being agreeably struck with the civility and respectable appearance of the hackney-coachmen, the porters, and others for whose services the

Library of Congress

traveller has occasion. You feel, generally, in your intercourse with these persons that you are dealing with men who have a character to maintain.

There is a sober substantial look about the dwellings of Boston, which pleases me more than the gayer aspect of our own city. In New York we are careful to keep the outside of our houses fresh with paint, a practice which does not exist here, and which I suppose we inherited from the Hollanders, who learned it I know not where—could it have been from the Chinese? The country houses of Holland, along the canals, are bright with paint, often of several different colors, and are as gay as pagodas. In their moist climate, where mould and moss so speedily gather, the practice may be founded in better reasons than it is with us.

“Boston,” said a friend to whom I spoke of the appearance of comfort and thrift in that city, “is a much more crowded place than you imagine, and where people are crowded there can not be comfort. In many of the neighborhoods, back of those houses which present so respectable an aspect, are buildings rising close to each other, inhabited by the poorer class, whose families are huddled together without sufficient space and air, and here it is that Boston poverty hides itself. You are more fortunate on your island, that your population can extend itself horizontally, instead of heaping itself up, as we have begun to do here.”

The first place which we could call pleasant after leaving Boston was Andover, where Stuart and Woods, now venerable with years, instruct the young orthodox ministers and missionaries of New England. It is prettily situated among green declivities. A little beyond, at North Andover, we came in sight of the roofs and spires of the new city of Lawrence, which already begin to show proudly on the sandy and sterile banks of the Merrimac, a rapid and shallow river. A year ago last February, the building of the city was begun; it has now five or six thousand inhabitants, and new colonists are daily thronging in. Brick kilns are smoking all over the country to supply materials for the walls of the dwellings. The place, I was told, astonishes visitors with its bustle and confusion. The streets are

Library of Congress

encumbered 322 with heaps of fresh earth, and piles of stone, brick, beams, and boards, and people can with difficulty hear each other speak, for the constant thundering of hammers, and the shouts of cartmen and wagoners urging their oxen and horses with their loads through the deep sand of the ways. "Before the last shower," said a passenger, "you could hardly see the city from this spot, on account of the cloud of dust that hung perpetually over it."

"Rome," says the old adage, "was not built in a day," but here is a city which, in respect of its growth, puts Rome to shame. The Romulus of this new city, who like the Latian of old, gives his name to the community of which he is the founder, is Mr. Abbot Lawrence, of Boston, a rich manufacturer, money-making and munificent, and more fortunate in building cities and endowing schools, than in foretelling political events. He is the modern Amphion, to the sound of whose music, the pleasant chink of dollars gathered in many a goodly dividend, all the stones which form the foundation of this Thebes dance into their places,

"And balf the mountain rolls into a wall."

Beyond Lawrence, in the state of New Hampshire, the train stopped a moment at Exeter, which those who delight in such comparisons might call the Eton of New England. It is celebrated for its academy, where Bancroft, Everett, and I know not how many more of the New England scholars and men of letters, received the first rudiments of 323 their education. It lies in a gentle depression of the surface of the country, not deep enough to be called a valley, on the banks of a little stream, and has a pleasant retired aspect. At Durham, some ten miles further on, we found a long train of freight-cars crowded with the children of a Sunday-school, just ready to set Out on a pic-nic party, the boys shouting, and the girls, of whom the number was prodigious, showing us their smiling faces. A few middle-aged men, and a still greater number of matrons, were dispersed among them to keep them in order. At Dover, where are several cotton mills, we saw a similar train, with a still larger crowd, and when we crossed the boundary of New Hampshire and entered South Berwick in Maine, we passed through a solitary forest of oaks, where long tables

and benches had been erected for their reception, and the birds were twittering in the branches over them.

At length the sight of numerous groups gathering blueberries, in an extensive tract of shrubby pasture, indicated that we were approaching a town, and in a few minutes we had arrived at Portland. The conductor, whom we found intelligent and communicative, recommended that we should take quarters, during our stay, at a place called the Veranda, or Oak Grove, on the water, about two miles from the town, and we followed his advice. We drove through Portland, which is nobly situated on an eminence overlooking Casco Bay, its maze of channels, and almost innumerable islands, with their green slopes, cultivated 324 fields, and rocky shores. We passed one arm of the sea after another on bridges, and at length found ourselves on a fine bold promontory, between Presumpscot river and the waters of Casco Bay. Here a house of entertainment has just been opened—the beginning of a new watering-place, which I am sure will become a favorite one in the hot months of our summers. The surrounding country is so intersected with straits, that, let the wind come from what quarter it may, it breathes cool over the waters; and the tide, rising twelve feet, can not ebb and flow without pushing forward the air and drawing it back again, and thus causing a motion of the atmosphere in the stillest weather.

We passed twenty-four hours in this pleasant retreat, among the oaks of its grove, and along its rocky shores, enjoying the agreeable coolness of the fresh and bracing atmosphere. To tell the truth we have found it quite cool enough ever since we reached Boston, five days ago; sometimes, in fact, a little too cool for the thin garments we are accustomed to wear at this season. Returning to Portland, we took passage in the steamer Huntress, for Augusta, up the Kennebeck. I thought to give you, in this letter, an account of this part of my journey, but I find I must reserve it for my next.

325

LETTER XLI. THE KENNEBECK.

Library of Congress

Keene, New Hampshire, *August 11, 1847.*

We left Portland early in the afternoon, on board the steamer Huntress, and swept out of the harbor, among the numerous green islands which here break the swell of the Atlantic, and keep the water almost as smooth as that of the Hudson. "It is said," remarked a passenger, "that there are as many of these islands as there are days in the year, but I do not know that any body has ever counted them" Two of the loftiest, rock-bound, with verdant summits, and standing out beyond the rest, overlooking the main ocean, bore light-houses, and near these we entered the mouth of the Kennebeck, which here comes into the sea between banks of massive rock.

At the mouth of the river were forests of stakes, for the support of the nets in which salmon, shad, and alewives are taken. The shad fishery, they told me, was not yet over, though the month of August was already come. We passed some small villages where we saw the keels of large unfinished vessels lying high upon the stocks; at Bath, one of the most considerable of these places, but a small village 28 326 still, were five or six, on which the ship-builders were busy. These, I was told, when once launched, would never be seen again in the place where they were built, but would convey merchandise between the great ports of the world.

"The activity of ship-building in the state of Maine," said a gentleman whom I afterward met, "is at this moment far greater than you can form any idea of, without travelling along our coast. In solitary places where a stream or creek large enough to float a ship is found, our builders lay the keels of their vessels. It is not necessary that the channel should be wide enough for the ship to turn round; it is enough if it will contain her lengthwise. They choose a bend in the river from which they can launch her with her head down stream, and, aided by the tide, float her out to sea, after which she proceeds to Boston or New York, or some other of our large seaports to do her part in carrying on the commerce of the world."

I learned that the ship-builders of Maine purchase large tracts of forest in Virginia and other states of the south, for their supply of timber. They obtain their oaks from the Virginia shore, their hard pine from North Carolina; the coverings of the deck and the smaller timbers of the large vessels are furnished by Maine. They take to the south cargoes of lime and other products of Maine, and bring back the huge trunks produced in that region. The larger trees on the banks of the navigable rivers of Maine were long ago wrought into the keels of vessels.

327

It was not far from Bath, and a considerable distance from the open sea, that we saw a large seal on a rock in the river. He turned his head slowly from side to side as we passed, without allowing himself to be disturbed by the noise we made, and kept his place as long as the eye could distinguish him. The presence of an animal always associated in the imagination With uninhabited coasts of the ocean, made us feel that we were advancing into a thinly or at least a newly peopled country.

Above Bath, the channel of the Kennebeck widens into what is called Merrymeeting Bay. Here the great Androscoggin brings in its waters from the southwest, and various other small streams from different quarters enter the bay, making it a kind of Congress of Rivers. It is full of wooded islands and rocky promontories projecting into the water and overshadowing it with their trees. As we passed up we saw, from time to time, farms pleasantly situated on the islands or the borders of the river, where, a soil more genial or more easily tilled had tempted the settler to fix himself. At length we approached Gardiner, a flourishing village, beautifully situated among the hills on the right bank of the Kennebeck. All traces of sterility had already disappeared from the country; the shores of the river were no longer rock-bound, but disposed in green terraces, with woody eminences behind them. Leaving Gardiner behind us, we went on to Hallowell, a village bearing similar marks of prosperity, where we landed, and were taken in 328 carriages to Augusta, the seat of government, three or four miles beyond.

Library of Congress

Augusta is a pretty village, seated on green and apparently fertile eminences that overlook the Kennebeck, and itself overlooked by still higher summits, covered with woods, The houses are neat, and shaded with trees, as is the case with all New England villages in the agricultural districts. I found the Legislature in session; the Senate, a small quiet body, deliberating for aught I could see, with as much grave and tranquil dignity as the Senate of the United States. The House of Representatives was just at the moment occupied by some railway question, which I was told excited more feeling than any subject that had been debated in the whole session, but even this occasioned no unseemly agitation; the surface was gently rippled, nothing more.

While at Augusta, we crossed the river and visited the Insane Asylum, a state institution, lying on the pleasant declivities of the opposite shore. It is a handsome stone building. One of the medical attendants accompanied us over a part of the building, and showed us some of the wards in which there were then scarcely any patients, and which appeared to be in excellent order, with the best arrangements for the comfort of the inmates, and a scrupulous attention to cleanliness. When we expressed a desire to see the patients, and to learn something of the manner in which they were treated, he replied, "We do not make a show of our patients; we only show the building." Our visit was, of course, soon dispatched. We learned afterward that this was either insolence or laziness on the part of the officer in question, whose business it properly was to satisfy any reasonable curiosity expressed by visitors.

It had been our intention to cross the country from Augusta directly to the White Hills in New Hampshire, and we took seats in the stage-coach with that view. Back of Augusta the country swells into hills of considerable height with deep hollows between, in which lie a multitude of lakes. We passed several of these, beautifully embosomed among woods, meadows, and pastures, and were told that if we continued on the course we had taken we should scarcely ever find ourselves without some sheet of water in sight till we arrived at Fryeburg on the boundary between Maine and New Hampshire. One of them, in the

township of Winthrop, struck us as particularly beautiful. Its shores are clean and bold, with little promontories running far into the water, and several small islands.

At Winthrop we found that the coach in which we set out would proceed to Portland, and that if we intended to go on to Fryeburg, we must take seats in a shabby wagon, without the least protection for our baggage. It was already beginning to rain, and this circumstance decided us; we remained in the coach and proceeded on our return to Portland. I have scarcely ever travelled in a country which presented a finer appearance of agricultural thrift and prosperity than the portions of the counties of Kennebeck and 330 Cumberland, through which our road carried us. The dwellings are large, neatly painted, surrounded with fruit-trees and shrubs, and the farms in excellent order, and apparently productive. We descended at length into the low country, crossed the Androscoggin to the county of York, where, as we proceeded, the country became more sandy and sterile, and the houses had a neglected aspect. At length, after a journey of fifty or sixty miles in the rain, we were again set down in the pleasant town of Portland.

331

LETTER XLII. THE WHITE MOUNTAINS.

Springfield, Mass., *August* 13, 1817.

I had not space in my last letter, which was written from Keene, in New Hampshire, to speak of a visit I had just made to the White Mountains. Do not think I am going to bore you with a set description of my journey and ascent of Mount Washington; a few notes of the excursion may possibly amuse you.

From Conway, where the stage-coach sets you down for the night, in sight of the summits of the mountains, the road to the Old Notch is a very picturesque one. You follow the path of the Saco along a wide valley, sometimes in the woods that overhang its bank, and sometimes on the edge of rich grassy meadows, till at length, as you leave behind you one

Library of Congress

summit after another, you find yourself in a little plain, apparently inclosed on every side by mountains.

Further on you enter the deep gorge which leads gradually upward to the Notch. In the midst of it is situated the Willey House, near which the Willey family were overtaken by an avalanche and perished as they were making their escape. It is now enlarged into a house of 332 accommodation for visitors to the mountains. Nothing can exceed the aspect of desolation presented by the lofty, mountain-ridges which rise on each side. They are streaked with the paths of landslides; occurring at different periods, which have left the rocky ribs of the mountains bare from their bald tops to the forests at their feet, and have filled the sides of the valley with heaps of earth, gravel, stones, and trunks of trees.

From the Willey house you ascend, for about two miles, a declivity, by no means steep, with these dark ridges frowning over you, your path here and there crossed by streams which have made for themselves passages in the granite sides of the mountains like narrow staircases, down which they come tumbling from one vast block to another. I afterward made acquaintance with two of these, and followed them upward from one clear pool and one white cascade to another till I was tired. The road at length passes through what may be compared to a natural gateway, a narrow chasm between tall cliffs, and through which the Saco, now a mere brook, finds its way. You find yourself in a green opening, looking like the bottom, of a drained lake with mountain summits around you. Here is one of the houses of accommodation from which you ascend Mount Washington.

If you should ever think of ascending Mount Washington, do not allow any of the hotel-keepers to cheat you in regard to the distance. It is about ten miles from either the

THE NOTCH HOUSE. WHITE MOUNTAINS.

333 hotels to the summit, and very little less from any of them. They keep a set of worn-out horses, which they hire for the season, and which are trained to climb the mountain, in a walk, by the worst bridle-paths in the world. The poor hacks are generally tolerably sure-

footed, but there are exceptions to this. Guides are sent with the visitors, who generally go on foot, strong-legged men, carrying long staves, and watching the ladies lest any accident should occur; some of these, especially those from the house in the Notch, commonly called Tom Crawford's, are unmannerly fellows enough.

The scenery of these mountains has not been sufficiently praised. But for the glaciers, but for the peaks white with perpetual snow, it would be scarcely worth while to see Switzerland after seeing the White Mountains. The depth of the valleys, the steepness of the mountain-sides, the variety of aspect shown by their summits, the deep gulfs of forest below, seamed with the open courses of rivers, the vast extent of the mountain region seen north and south of us, gleaming with many lakes, took me with surprise and astonishment. Imagine the forests to be shorn from half the broad declivities—imagine scattered habitations on the thick green turf and footpaths leading from one to the other, and herds and flocks browsing, and you have Switzerland before you. I admit, however, that these accessories add to the variety and interest of the landscape, and perhaps heighten the idea of its vastness.

334

I have been told, however, that the White Mountains in autumn present an aspect more glorious than even the splendors of the perpetual ice of the Alps. All this, mighty multitude of mountains, rising from valleys filled with dense forests, have then put on their hues of gold and scarlet, and, seen more distinctly on account of their brightness of color, seem to tower higher in the clear blue of the sky. At that season of the year they are little visited, and only awaken the wonder of the occasional traveller.

It is not necessary to ascend Mount Washington, to enjoy the finest views. Some of the lower peaks offer grander though not so extensive ones; the height of the main summit seems to diminish the size of the objects behold from it. The sense of solitude and immensity is however most strongly felt on that great cone, overlooking all the rest, and formed of loose rocks, which seem as if broken into fragments by the power which

Library of Congress

upheaved these ridges from the depths of the earth below. At some distance on the northern side of one of the summits, I saw a large snow-drift lying in the August sunshine.

The Franconia Notch, which we afterwards visited, is almost as remarkable for the two beautiful little lakes within it, as for the savage grandeur of the mountain-walls between which it passes. At this place I was shown a hen clucking over a brood of young puppies. They were littered near the nest where she was sitting, when she immediately abandoned her eggs and adopted them as her offspring. 335 She had a battle with the mother, and proved victorious; after which, however, a compromise took place, the slut nursing the puppies and the hen covering them as well as she could with her wings. She was strutting among them when I saw her, with an appearance of pride at having produced so gigantic a brood.

From Franconia we proceeded to Bath, 'on or near' the Connecticut, and entered the lovely valley of that river, which is as beautiful in New Hampshire, as in any part of its course. Hanover, the seat of Dartmouth College, is a pleasant spot, but the traveller will find there the worst hotels on the river. Windsor, on the Vermont side, is a still finer village, with trim gardens and streets shaded old trees; Bellows Falls is one of the most striking places for its scenery in all New England. The coach brought us to the railway station in the pleasant village of Greenfield. We took seats in the train, and leaving on our left the quiet old streets of Deerfield under their ancient trees, and passing a dozen or more of the villages on the meadows of the Connecticut found ourselves in less than two hours in this flourishing place, which is rapidly rising to be one of the most important towns in New England.

336

LETTER XLIII. A PASSAGE TO SAVANNAH.

Augusta, Georgia, *March 29*, 1849.

A Quiet passage by sea from New York to Savannah would seem to afford little matter for a letter, yet those who take the trouble to read what I am about to write, will, I hope,

Library of Congress

admit that there are some things to be observed, even on such a voyage. It was indeed a remarkably quiet one, and worthy of note on that account, if on no other. We had a quiet vessel, quiet weather, a quiet, good-natured captain, a quiet crew, and remarkably quiet passengers.

When we left the wharf at New York last week, in the good steamship Tennessee, we were not conscious, at first, as we sat in the cabin, that she was in motion and proceeding down the harbor. There was no beating or churning of the sea, no struggling to get forward; her paddles played in the water as smoothly as those of a terrapin, without jar or noise. The Tennessee is one of the tightest and strongest boats that navigate our coast; the very flooring of her deck is composed of timbers instead of planks, and helps to keep her massive frame more compactly and solidly together. It was her first voyage; her fifty-one passengers lolled on sofas 337 fresh from the upholsterer's, and slept on mattresses which had never been pressed by the human form before, in state-rooms where foul air had never collected. Nor is it possible that the air should become impure in them to any great degree, for the Tennessee is the best-ventilated ship I ever was in; the main cabin and the state-rooms are connected with each other and with the deck, by numerous openings and pipes which keep up a constant circulation of air in every part.

I have spoken of the passengers as remarkably quiet persons. Several of them, I believe, never spoke during the passage, at least so it seemed to me. The silence would have been almost irksome, but for two lively little girls who amused us by their prattle, and two young women, apparently just married, too happy to do any thing but laugh, even when suffering from seasickness, and whom we now and then heard shouting and squealing from their state-rooms. There were two dark-haired, long-limbed gentlemen, who lay the greater part of the first and second day at full length on the sofas in the after-cabin, each with a spittoon before him, chewing tobacco with great rapidity and industry, and apparently absorbed in the endeavor to fill it within a given time. There was another, with that atrabilious complexion peculiar to marshy countries, and circles of a still deeper hue about his eyes, who sat on deck, speechless and motionless, wholly indifferent to the

Library of Congress

sound of the dinner-bell, his countenance fixed in an expression which seemed to indicate an utter disgust of life. 29

338

Yet we had some snatches of good talk on the voyage. A robust old gentleman, a native of Norwalk, in Connecticut, told us that he had been reading a history of that place by the Rev. Mr. Hall.

"I find, said he, " that in his account of the remarkable people of Norwalk, he has omitted to speak of two of the most remarkable, two spinsters, Sarah and Phebe Comstock, relatives of mine and friends of my youth, of whom I retain a vivid recollection. They were in opulent circumstances for the neighborhood in which they lived, possessing a farm of about two hundred acres; they were industrious, frugal, and extremely charitable; but they never relieved a poor family without visiting it, and inquiring carefully into its circumstances. Sarah was the housekeeper, and Phebe the farmer. Phebe knew nothing of kitchen matters, but she knew at what time of the year greensward should be broken up, and corn planted, and potatoes dug. She dropped Indian corn and sowed English grain with her own hands. In the time of planting or of harvest, it was Sarah who visited and relieved the poor.

"I remember that they had various ways of employing the young people who called upon them. If it was late in the autumn, there was a chopping-board and chopping-knife ready, with the feet of neat-cattle, from which the oily parts had been extracted by boiling. 'You do not want to be idle,' they would say, 'chop this meat, and you shall have your share of the mince-pies that we are going to make.' 339 At other times a supply of old woollen stockings were ready for unravelling. 'We know you do not care to be idle,' they would say, 'here are some stockings which you would oblige us by unravelling.' If you asked what use they made of the spools of woollen thread obtained by this process, they would answer: 'We use it as the weft of the linsey-woolsey with which we clothe our negroes.' They had negro slaves in those times, and old Tone, a faithful black servant of theirs, who has seen more than a hundred years, is alive yet.

"They practiced one very peculiar piece of economy. The white hickory you know, yields the purest and sweetest of saccharine juices. They had their hickory fuel cut into short billets, which before placing on the fire they laid on the andirons, a little in front of the blaze, so as to subject it to a pretty strong heat. This caused the syrup in the wood to drop from each end of the billet, where it was caught in a cup, and in this way a gallon or two was collected in the course of a fortnight. With this they flavored their nicest cakes.

"They died about thirty years since, one at the age of eighty-nine, and the other at the age of ninety. On the tomb-stone of one of them, it was recorded that she had been a member of the church for seventy years. Their father was a remarkable man in his way. He was a rich man in his time, and kept a park of deer, one of the last known in Connecticut, for the purpose of supplying his table 340 with venison. He prided himself on the strict and literal fulfillment of his word. On one occasion he had a law-suit with one of his neighbors, before a justice of the peace, in which he was cast and ordered to pay ten shillings damages, and a shilling as the fees of court. He paid the ten shillings, and asked the justice whether he would allow him to pay the remaining shilling when he next passed his door. The magistrate readily consented, but from that time old Comstock never went by his house. Whenever he had occasion to go to church, or to any other place, the direct road to which led by the justice's door, he was careful to take a lane which passed behind the dwelling, and at some distance from it. The shilling remained unpaid up to the day of his death, and it was found that in his last will he had directed that his corpse should be carried by that lane to the place of interment."

When we left the quarantine ground on Thursday morning, after lying moored all night with a heavy rain beating on the deck, the sky was beginning to clear with a strong northwest wind and the decks were slippery with ice. When the sun rose it threw a cold white light upon the waters, and the passengers who appeared on deck were muffled to the eyes. As we proceeded southwardly, the temperature grew milder, and the day closed with a calm and pleasant sunset. The next day the weather was still milder, until about noon, when

Library of Congress

we arrived off Cape Hatteras a strong wind set in from the northeast, clouds gathered 341 with a showery aspect, and every thing seemed to betoken an impending storm. At this moment the captain shifted the direction of the voyage, from south to southwest; we ran before the wind leaving the storm, if there was any, behind us, and the day closed with another quiet and brilliant sunset.

The next day, the third of our voyage, broke upon us like a day in summer, with amber-colored sunshine and the blindest breezes that ever blew. An awning was stretched over the deck to protect us from the beams of the sun, and all the passengers gathered under it; the two dark-complexioned gentlemen left the task of filling the spittoons below, and came up to chew their tobacco on deck; the atrabilious passenger was seen to interest himself in the direction of the compass, and once was thought to smile, and the hale old gentleman repeated the history of his Norwalk relatives. On the fourth morning we landed at Savannah. It was delightful to eyes which had seen only russet fields and leafless trees for months, to gaze on the new and delicate green of the trees and the herbage. The weeping willows drooped in full leaf, the later oaks were putting forth their new foliage, the locust-trees had hung out their tender sprays and their clusters of blossoms not yet unfolded, the Chinese wistaria covered the sides of houses with its festoons of blue Mossoms, and roses were nodding at us in the wind, from the tops of the brick walls which surround the gardens.

Yet winter had been here, I saw. The orange-trees which, 29* 342 since the great frost seven or eight years ago, had sprung from the ground and grown to the height of fifteen or twenty feet, had a few days before my arrival felt another severe frost, and stood covered with sere dry leaves in the gardens, some of them yet laden with fruit. The trees were not killed, however, as formerly, though they will produce no fruit this season, and new leaf-buds were beginning to sprout on their boughs. The dwarf-orange, a hardier tree, had escaped entirely, and its blossoms were beginning to open.

Library of Congress

I visited Bonaventure, which I formerly described in one of my letters. It has lost 'the interest of utter solitude and desertion which it then had. A Gothic cottage has been built on the place, and the avenues of live-oaks have been surrounded with an inclosure, for the purpose of making a cemetery on the spot. Yet there they stand, as solemn as ever, lifting and stretching their long irregular branches overhead, hung with masses and festoons of gray moss. It almost seemed, when I looked up to them, as if the clouds had come nearer to the earth than is their wont, and formed themselves into the shadowy ribs of the vault above me, The drive to Bonaventure at this season of the year is very beautiful, though the roads are sandy; it is partly along an avenue of tall trees, and partly through the woods, where the dog-wood and azalea and thorn-trees are in blossom, and the ground is sprinkled with flowers Here and there are dwellings beside the road. "They are unsafe the greater part of the year," said the gentleman who 343 drove me out, and who spoke from professional knowledge, "a summer residence in them is sure to bring dangerous fevers." Savannah is a healthy city, but it is like Rome, imprisoned by

The city of Savannah, since I saw it six years ago, has enlarged considerably, and the additions made to it increase its beauty. The streets have been extended on the south side, on the same plan as those of the rest of the city, with small parks at short distances from each other, planted with trees; and the new houses are handsome and well-built. The communications opened with the interior by long lines of railway have, no doubt, been the principal occasion of this prosperity. These and the Savannah river send enormous quantities of cotton to the Savannah market. One should see, with the bodily eye, the multitude of bales of this commodity accumulating in the warehouses and elsewhere, in order to form an idea of the extent to which it is produced in the southern states—long trains of cars heaped with bales, steamer after steamer loaded high with bales coming down the rivers, acres of bales on the wharves, acres of bales at the railway stations—one should see all this, and then carry his thoughts to the millions of the civilized world who are clothed by this great staple of our country.

I came to this place by steamer to Charleston and then by railway. The line of the railway, one hundred and thirty-seven miles in length, passes through the most unproductive district of South Carolina. It is in fact nothing but a waste 344 of forest, with here and there an open field, half a dozen glimpses of plantations, and about as many villages, none of which are considerable, and some of which consist of not more than half a dozen houses. Aiken, however, sixteen miles before you reach the Savannah river, has a pleasant aspect. It is situated on a comparatively high tract of country, sandy and barren, but healthy, and hither the planters resort in the hot months from their homes in the less salubrious districts. Pretty cottages stand dispersed among the oaks and pines, and immediately west of the place the country descends in pleasant undulations towards the valley of the Savannah.

The appearance of Augusta struck me very agreeably as I reached it, on a most delightful afternoon, which seemed to me more like June than March. I was delighted to see turf again, regular greensward of sweet grasses and clover, such as you see in May in the northern states, and do not meet on the coast in the southern states. The city lies on a broad rich plain on the Savannah river, with woody declivities to the north and west. I have seen several things here since my arrival which interested me much, and if I can command time I will speak of them in another letter.

345

LETTER XLIV. SOUTHERN COTTON MILLS.

Barnwell District, South Carolina, *March* 31, 1849.

I promised to say something more of Augusta if I had time before departing from Cuba, and I find that I have a few moments to spare for a hasty letter.

The people of Augusta boast of the beauty of their place, and not without some reason. The streets are broad, and in some parts overshadowed with rows of fine trees. The banks

Library of Congress

of the river on which it stands are high and firm, and slopes half covered with forest, of a pleasant aspect, overlook it from the west and from the Carolina side. To the south stretches a broad champaign country, on which are some of the finest plantations of Georgia. I visited one of these, consisting of ten thousand acres, kept throughout in as perfect order as a small farm at the north, though large enough for a German principality.

But what interested me most, was a visit to a cotton mill in the neighborhood,—a sample of a class of manufacturing establishments, where the poor white people of this state and of South Carolina find occupation. It is a large 346 manufactory, and the machinery is in as perfect order as in, any of the mills at the north. “Here,” said a gentleman who accompanied us, as we entered the long apartment in the second story, “you will see a sample of the brunettes of the piny woods.”

The girls of various ages, who are employed at the spindles, had, for the most part, a sallow, sickly complexion, and in many of their faces, I remarked that look of mingled distrust and dejection which often accompanies the condition of extreme, hopeless poverty. “These poor girls,” said one of our party, “think themselves extremely fortunate to be employed here, and accept work gladly. They come from the most barren parts of Carolina and Georgia, where their families live wretchedly, often upon unwholesome food, and as idly as wretchedly, for hitherto there has been no manual occupation provided for them from which they do not shrink as disgraceful, on account of its being the occupation of slaves. In these factories negroes are not employed as operatives, and this gives the calling of the factory girl a certain dignity. You would be surprised to see the change which a short time effects in these poor people. They come barefooted, dirty, and in rags; they are scoured, put into shoes and stockings, set at work and sent regularly to the Sunday-schools, where they are taught what none of them have been taught before—to read and write. In a short time they became expert at their work; they lose their sullen shyness, and their physiognomy becomes 347 comparatively open and cheerful. Their families are

Library of Congress

relieved from the temptations to theft and other shameful courses which accompany the condition of poverty without occupation.”

“They have a good deal of the poke-easy manner of the piny woods about them yet,” said one of our party, a Georgian. It was true, I perceived that they had not yet acquired all that alacrity and quickness in their work which you see in the work-people of the New England mills. In one of the upper stories I saw a girl of a clearer complexion than the rest, with two long curls swinging behind each ear, as she stepped about with the air of a duchess. “That girl is from the north,” said our conductor; “at first we placed an expert operative from the north in each story of the building as an instructor and pattern to the rest.”

I have since learned that some attempts were made at first to induce the poor white people to work side by side with the blacks in these mills. These utterly failed, and the question then became with the proprietors whether they should employ blacks only or whites only; whether they should give these poor people an occupation which, while it tended to elevate their condition, secured a more expert class of work-people than the negroes could be expected to become, or whether they should rely upon the less intelligent and more negligent services of slaves. They decided at length upon banishing the labor of blacks from their 348 mills. At Graniteville, in South Carolina, about ten miles from the Savannah river, a neat little manufacturing village has lately been built up, where the families of the *crackers*, as they are called, reclaimed from their idle lives in the woods, are settled, and white labor only is employed. The enterprise is said to be in a most prosperous condition.

Only coarse cloths are made in these mills—strong, thick fabrics, suitable for negro shirting-and the demand for this kind of goods, I am told, is greater than the supply. Every yard made in this manufactory at Augusta, is taken off as soon as it leaves the loom. I fell in with a northern man in the course of the day, who told me that these mills had driven the northern manufacturer of coarse cottons out of the southern market.

Library of Congress

"The buildings are erected here more cheaply," he continued, "there is far less expense in fuel, and the wages of the workpeople are less. At first the boys and girls of the cracker families were engaged for little more than their board; their wages are now better, but they are still low. I am about to go to the north, and I shall do my best to persuade some of my friends, who have been almost ruined by this southern competition, to come to Augusta and set up cotton mills."

There is water-power at Augusta sufficient to turn the machinery of many large establishments. A canal from the Savannah river brings in a large volume of water, which passes from level to level, and might be made to turn the 349 spindles and drive the looms of a populous manufacturing town. Such it will become, if any faith is to be placed in present indications, and a considerable manufacturing population will be settled at this place, drawn from the half-wild inhabitants of the most barren parts of the southern states. I look upon the introduction of manufactures at the south as an event of the most favorable promise for that part of the country, since it both condenses a class of population too thinly scattered to have the benefit of the institutions of civilized life, of education and religion—and restores one branch of labor, at least, to its proper dignity, in a region where manual labor has been the badge of servitude and dependence.

One of the pleasantest spots in the neighborhood of Augusta is Somerville, a sandy eminence, covered with woods, the shade of which is carefully cherished, and in the midst of which are numerous cottages and country seats, closely embowered in trees, with pleasant paths leading to them from the highway. Here the evenings in summer are not so oppressively hot as in the town below, and dense as the shade is, the air is dry and elastic. Hither many families retire during the hot season, and many reside here the year round. We drove through it as the sun was setting, and called at the dwellings of several of the hospitable inhabitants. The next morning the railway train brought us to Barnwell District, in South Carolina, where I write this. 30

I intended to send you some notes of the agricultural changes which I have observed in this part of South Carolina since I was last here, but I have hardly time to do it. The culture of wheat has been introduced, many planters now raising enough for their own consumption. The sugar cane is also planted, and quantities of sugar and molasses are often made sufficient to supply the plantations on which it is cultivated. Spinning-wheels and looms have come into use, and a strong and durable cotton cloth is woven by the negro women for the wear of the slaves. All this shows a desire to make the most of the resources of the country, and to protect the planter against the embarrassments which often arise from the fluctuating prices of the great staple of the south—cotton. But I have no time to dwell upon this subject. To-morrow I sail for Cuba.

351

LETTER XLV. THE FLORIDA COAST.—KEY WEST.

Havana, *April 1*, 1849.

It was a most agreeable voyage which I made in the steamer Isabel, to this port, the wind in our favor the whole distance, fine bright weather, the temperature passing gradually from what we have it in New York at the end of May, to what it is in the middle of June. The Isabel is a noble sea-boat, of great strength, not so well ventilated as the Tennessee, in which we came to Savannah, with spacious and comfortable cabins, and, I am sorry to say, rather dirty state-rooms.

We stopped off Savannah near the close of the first day of our voyage, to leave some of our passengers and take in others; and on the second, which was also the second of the month, we were running rapidly down the Florida coast, with the trade-wind fresh on our beam, sweeping before it a long swell from the east, in which our vessel rocked too much for the stomachs of most of the passengers. The next day the sea was smoother; we had changed our direction somewhat and were going before the wind, the Florida 352 reefs full in sight, with their long streak of white surf, beyond which, along the line of

Library of Congress

the shore, lay a belt of water, of bright translucent green, and in front the waves wore an amethystine tint. We sat the greater part of the day under an awning. A long line, with a baited hook at the end, was let down into the water from the stern of our vessel, and after being dragged there an hour or two, it was seized by a king-fish, which was immediately hauled on board. It was an elegantly shaped fish, weighing nearly twenty pounds, with a long head, and scales shining with blue and purple. It was served up for dinner, and its flavor much commended by the amateurs.

The waters around us were full of sails, gleaming in the sunshine. "They belong," said our Charleston pilot, "to the wreckers who live at Key West. Every morning they come out and cruise among the reefs, to discover if there are any vessels wrecked or in distress—the night brings them back to the harbor on their island."

Your readers know, I presume, that at Key West is a town containing nearly three thousand inhabitants, who subsist solely by the occupation of relieving vessels in distress navigating this dangerous coast, and bringing in such as are wrecked. The population, of course, increases with the commerce of the country, and every vessel that sails from our ports to the Gulf of Mexico, or comes from the Gulf to the North, every addition to the intercourse of the Atlantic ports with Mobile, New Orleans, the West Indies, 353 or Central America, adds to their chances of gain. These people neither plant nor sow; their isle is a low barren spot, surrounded by a beach of white sand, formed of disintegrated porous limestone, and a covering of the same sand, spread thinly over the rock, forms its soil.

"It is a scandal," said the pilot, "that this coast is not better lighted. A few light-houses would make its navigation much safer, and they would be built, if Florida had any man in Congress to represent the matter properly to the government. I have long been familiar with this coast— sixty times, at least, I have made the voyage from Charleston to Havana, and I am sure that there is no such dangerous navigation on the coast of the United States. In going to Havana, or to New Orleans, or to other ports on the gulf, commanders of vessels try to avoid the current of the gulf-stream which would carry them to the north,

Library of Congress

and they, therefore, shave the Florida coast, and keep near the reefs which you see yonder. They often strike the reefs inadvertently, or are driven against them by storms. In returning northward the navigation is safer; we give a good offing to the reefs and strike out into the gulf-stream, the current of which carries us in the direction of our voyage.”

A little before nine o'clock we had entered the little harbor of Key West, and were moored in its still waters. It was a bright moonlight evening, and we rambled two or three hours about the town and the island. The hull of a dismantled 30* 354 vessel lay close by our landing-place; it had no name on bow or stern, and had just been found abandoned at sea, and brought in by the wreckers; its cargo, consisting of logwood, had been taken out and lay in piles on the wharf. This town has principally grown up since the Florida war. The habitations have a comfortable appearance; some of them are quite neat, but the sterility of the place is attested by the want of gardens. In some of the inclosures before the houses, however, there were tropical shrubs in flower, and here the cocoanut-tree was growing, and other trees of the palm kind, which rustled with a sharp dry sound in the fresh wind from the sea. They were the first palms I had seen growing in the open air, and they gave a tropical aspect to the place.

We fell in with a man who had lived thirteen years at Key West. He told us that its three thousand inhabitants had four places of worship—an Episcopal, a Catholic, a Methodist, and a Baptist church; and the drinking-houses which we saw open, with such an elaborate display of bottles and decanters, were not resorted to by the people of the place, but were the haunt of English and American sailors, whom the disasters, or the regular voyages of their vessels had brought hither. He gave us an account of the hurricane of September, 1846, which overflowed and laid waste the island.

“Here where we stand,” said he, “the water was four feet deep at least. I saved my family in a boat, and 355 carried them to a higher part of the island. Two houses which I owned were swept away by the flood, and I was ruined. Most of the dwellings were unroofed by the wind; every vessel belonging to the place was lost; dismantled hulks were floating

Library of Congress

about, and nobody knew to whom they belonged, and dead bodies of men and women lay scattered along the beach. It was the worst hurricane ever known at Key West; before it came, we used to have a hurricane regularly once in two years, but we have had none since."

A bell was rung about this time, and we asked the reason. "It is to signify that the negroes must be at their homes," answered the man. We inquired if there were many blacks in the place. "Till lately," he replied, "there were about eighty, but since the United States government has begun to build the fort yonder, their number has increased. Several broken-down planters, who have no employment for their slaves, have sent them to Key West to be employed by the government. We do not want them here, and wish that the government would leave them on the hands of their masters."

On the fourth morning when we went on deck, the coast of Cuba, a ridge of dim hills, was in sight, and our vessel was rolling in the unsteady waves of the gulf stream, which here beat against the northern shore of the island. It was a hot morning, as the mornings in this climate always are till the periodical breeze springs up, about ten o'clock, and 356 refreshes all the islands that lie in the embrace of the gulf. In a short time, the cream-colored walls of the Morro, the strong castle which guards the entrance to the harbor of Havana, appeared rising from the waters. We passed close to the cliffs on which it is built, were hailed in English, a gun was fired, our steamer darted through a narrow entrance into the harbor, and anchored in the midst of what appeared a still inland lake.

The city of Havana has a cheerful appearance seen from the harbor. Its massive houses, built for the most part of the porous rock of the island, are covered with stucco, generally of a white or cream color, but often stained sky-blue or bright yellow. Above these rise the dark towers and domes of the churches, apparently built of a more durable material, and looking more venerable for the gay color of the dwellings amidst which they stand. The extensive fortifications of Cabañas crown the heights on that side of the harbor which lies

opposite to the town; and south of the city a green, fertile valley, in which stand scattered palm-trees, stretches towards the pleasant village of Cerro.

We lay idly in the stream for two hours, till the authorities of the port could find time to visit us. They arrived at last, and without coming on board, subjected the captain to a long questioning, and searched the newspapers he brought for intelligence relating to the health of the port from which he sailed. At last they gave us leave to land, 357 without undergoing a quarantine, and withdrew, taking with them our passports. We went on shore, and after three hours further delay got our baggage through the custom-house.

358

LETTER XLVI. HAVANA.

Havana, *April* 10, 1849.

I find that it requires a greater effort of resolution to sit down to the writing of a long letter in this soft climate, than in the country I have left. I feel a temptation to sit idly, and let the grateful wind from the sea, coming in at the broad windows, flow around me, or read, or talk, as I happen to have a book or a companion. That there is something in a tropical climate which indisposes one to vigorous exertion I can well believe, from what I experience in myself, and what I see around me. The ladies do not seem to take the least exercise, except an occasional drive on the Paseo, or public park; they never walk out, and when they are shopping, which is no less the vocation of their sex here than in other civilized countries, they never descend from their *volantes*, but the goods are brought out by the obsequious shopkeeper, and the lady makes her choice and discusses the price as she sits in her carriage.

Yet the women of Cuba show no tokens of delicate health. Freshness of color does not belong to a latitude so near the equator, but they have plump figures, placid, unwrinkled
359 countenances, a well-developed bust, and eyes, the brilliant languor of which is not the languor of illness. The girls as well as the young men, have rather narrow shoulders,

Library of Congress

but as they advance in life, the chest, in the women particularly, seems to expand from year to year; till it attains an amplitude by no means common in our country. I fully believe that this effect, and their general health, in spite of the inaction in which they pass their lives, is owing to the free circulation of air through their apartments.

For in Cuba, the women as well as the men may be said to live in the open air. They know nothing of close rooms, in all the island, and nothing of foul air, and to this, I have no doubt, quite as much as to the mildness of the temperature, the friendly effect of its climate upon invalids from the north is to be ascribed. Their ceilings are extremely lofty, and the wide windows, extending from the top of the room to the floor and guarded by long perpendicular bars of iron, are without glass, and when closed are generally only closed with blinds which, while they break the force of the wind when it is too strong, do not exclude the air. Since I have been on the island, I may be said to have breakfasted and dined and supped and slept in the open air, in an atmosphere which is never in repose except for a short time in the morning after sunrise. At other times a breeze is always stirring, in the day-time bringing in the air from the ocean, and at night drawing it out again to the sea.

360

In walking through the streets of the towns in Cuba, I have been entertained by the glimpses I had through the ample windows, of what was going on in the parlors. Sometimes a curtain hanging before them allowed me only a sight of the small hands which clasped the bars of the grate, and the dusky faces and dark eyes peeping into the street and scanning the passers by. At other times, the whole room was seen, with its furniture, and its female forms sitting in languid postures, courting the breeze as it entered from without. In the evening, as I passed along the narrow sidewalk of the narrow streets, I have been startled at finding myself almost in the midst of a merry party gathered about the window of a brilliantly lighted room, and chattering the soft Spanish of the island in voices that sounded strangely near to me. I have spoken of their languid postures: they love to recline on sofas; their houses are filled with rocking-chairs imported from the United

Library of Congress

States; they are fond of sitting in chairs tilted against the wall, as we sometimes do at home. Indeed they go beyond us in this respect; for in Cuba they have invented a kind of chair which, by lowering the back and raising the knees, places the sitter precisely in the posture he would take if he sat in a chair leaning backward against a wall. It is a luxurious attitude, I must own, and I do not wonder that it is a favorite with lazy people, for it relieves one of all the trouble of keeping the body upright.

It is the women who form the large majority of the worshippers 361 in the churches. I landed here in Passion Week, and the next day was Holy Thursday, when not a vehicle on wheels of any sort is allowed to be seen in the streets; and the ladies, contrary to their custom during the rest of the year, are obliged to resort to the churches on foot. Negro servants of both sexes were seen passing to and fro, carrying mats on which their mistresses were to kneel in the morning service. All the white female population, young and old, were dressed in black, with black lace veils. In the afternoon, three wooden or waxen images of the size of life, representing Christ in the different stages of his passion, were placed in the spacious Church of St. Catharine, which was so thronged that I found it difficult to enter. Near the door was a figure of the Saviour sinking under the weight of his cross, and the worshippers were kneeling to kiss his feet. Aged negro men and women, half-naked negro children, ladies richly attired, little girls in Parisian dresses, with lustrous black eyes and a profusion of ringlets, cast themselves down before the image, and pressed their lips to its feet in a passion of devotion. Mothers led up their little ones, and showed them how to perform this act of adoration. I saw matrons and young women rise from it with their eyes red with tears.

The next day, which was Good Friday, about twilight, a long procession came trailing slowly through the streets under my window, bearing an image of the dead Christ, lying upon a cloth of gold. It was accompanied by a body 31 362 of soldiery, holding their muskets reversed, and a band playing plaintive tunes; the crowd uncovered their heads as it passed. On Saturday morning, at ten o'clock, the solemnities of holy week were over; the bells rang a merry peal; hundreds of volantes and drays, which had stood ready

Library of Congress

harnessed, rushed into the streets; the city became suddenly noisy with the rattle of wheels and the tramp of horses; the shops which had been shut for the last two days, were opened; and the ladies, in white or light-colored muslins, were proceeding in their volantes to purchase at the shops their costumes for the Easter festivities.

I passed the evening on the *Plaza de Armas*, a public square in front of the Governor's house, planted with palms and other trees, paved with broad flags, and bordered with a row of benches. It was crowded with people in their best dresses, the ladies mostly in white, and without bonnets, for the bonnet in this country is only worn while travelling. Chairs had been placed for them in a double row around the edge of the square, and a row of volantes surrounded the square, in each of which sat two or more ladies, the ample folds of their muslin dresses flowing out on each side over the steps of the carriage. The Governor's band played various airs, martial and civic, with great beauty of execution. The music continued for two hours, and the throng, with only occasional intervals of conversation, seemed to give themselves up wholly to the enjoyment of listening to it.

It was a bright moonlight night, so bright that one might almost see to read, and the temperature the finest I can conceive, a gentle breeze rustling among the palms overhead. I was surprised at seeing around me so many fair brows and snowy necks. It is the moonlight, said I to myself, or perhaps it is the effect of the white dresses, for the complexions of these ladies seem to differ several shades from those which I saw yesterday at the churches. A female acquaintance has since given me another solution of the matter.

"The reason," she said, "of the difference you perceived is this, that during the ceremonies of holy week they take off the *cascarilla* from their faces, and appear in their natural complexions."

I asked the meaning of the word *cascarilla*, which I did not remember to have heard before.

Library of Congress

“It is the favorite cosmetic of the island, and is made of egg-shells finely pulverized. They often fairly plaster their faces with it. I have seen a dark-skinned lady as white almost as marble at a ball. They will sometimes, at a morning call or an evening party, withdraw to repair the *cascarilla* on their faces.”

I do not vouch for this tale, but tell it “as it was told to me.” Perhaps, after all, it was the moonlight which had produced this transformation, though I had noticed something of the same improvement of complexion just before sunset, on the Pasco Isabel, a public park without the city walls, planted with rows of trees, where, every afternoon, the gentry of Havana drive backward, and forward in their 364 volantes, with each a glittering harness, and a liveried negro bestriding, in large jack-boots, the single horse which draws the vehicle.

I had also the same afternoon visited the receptacle into which the population of the city are swept when the game of life is played out—the Campo Santo, as it is called, or public cemetery of Havana. Going out of the city at the gate nearest the sea, I passed through a street of the wretchedest houses I had seen; the ocean was roaring at my right on the coral rocks which form the coast. The dingy habitations were soon left behind, and I saw the waves, pushed forward by a fresh wind, flinging their spray almost into the road; I next entered a short avenue of trees, and in a few minutes the volante stopped at the gate of the cemetery. In a little inclosure before the entrance, a few starveling flowers of Europe were cultivated, but the wild plants of the country flourished luxuriantly on the rich soil within. A thick wall surrounded the cemetery, in which were rows of openings for coffins, one above the other, where the more opulent of the dead were entombed. The coffin is thrust in endwise, and the opening closed with a marble slab bearing an inscription.

Most of these niches were already occupied, but in the earth below, by far the greater part of those who die at Havana, are buried without a monument or a grave which they are allowed to hold a longer time than is necessary for their bodies to be consumed in the quicklime which is 365 thrown upon them. Every day fresh trenches are dug into which

Library of Congress

their bodies are thrown, generally without coffins. Two of these, one near each wall of the cemetery, were waiting for the funerals. I saw where the spade had divided the bones of those who were buried there last, and thrown up the broken fragments, mingled with masses of lime, locks of hair, and bits of clothing. Without the walls was a receptacle in which the skulls and other larger bones, dark with the mould of the grave, were heaped.

Two or three persons were walking about the cemetery when we first entered, but it was now at length the cool of the day, and the funerals began to arrive. They brought in first a rude black coffin, broadest at the extremity which contained the head, and placing it at the end of one of the trenches, hurriedly produced a hammer and nails to fasten the lid before letting it down, when it was found that the box was too shallow at the narrower extremity. The lid was removed for a moment and showed the figure of an old man in a threadbare black coat, white pantaloons, and boots. The negroes who bore it beat out the bottom with the hammer, so as to allow the lid to be fastened over the feet. It was then nailed down firmly with coarse nails, the coffin was swung into the trench, and the earth shovelled upon it. A middle-aged man, who seemed to be some relative of the dead, led up a little boy close to the grave and watched the process of filling it. They spoke to each other and smiled, stood till the pit was filled to the surface, and the 31* 366 bearers had departed, and then retired in their turn. This was one of the more respectable class of funerals. Commonly the dead are piled without coffins, one above the other, in the trenches.

The funerals now multiplied. The corpse of a little child was brought in, uncoffined; and another, a young man who, I was told, had cut his throat for love, was borne towards one of the niches in the wall. I heard loud voices, which seemed to proceed from the eastern side of the cemetery, and which, I thought at first, might be the recitation of a funeral service; but no funeral service is said at these graves; and, after a time, I perceived that they came from the windows of a long building which overlooked one side of the burial ground. It was a mad-house. The inmates, exasperated at the spectacle before them, were gesticulating from the windows—the women screaming and the men shouting, but no attention was paid to their uproar. A lady, however, a stranger to the island, who visited

Library of Congress

the Campo Santo that afternoon, was so affected by the sights and sounds of the place, that she was borne out weeping and almost in convulsions. As we left the place, we found a crowd of volantes about the gate; a pompous bier, with rich black hangings, drew up; a little, beyond, we met one of another kind —a long box, with glass sides and ends, in which lay the corpse of a woman, dressed in white, with a black veil thrown over the face.

The next day the festivities, which were to indemnify the 367 people for the austerities of Lent and of Passion Week, began. The cock-pits were opened during the day, and masked balls were given in the evening at the theatres. You know, probably, that cock-fighting is the principal diversion of the island, having entirely supplanted the national spectacle of bull-baiting. Cuba, in fact, seemed to me a great poultry-yard. I heard the crowing of cocks in all quarters, for the game-cock is the noisiest and most boastful of birds, and is perpetually uttering his notes of defiance. In the villages I saw the veterans of the pit, a strong-legged race, with their combs cropped smooth to the head, the feathers plucked from every part of the body except their wings, and the tail docked like that of a coach horse, picking up their food in the lanes among the chickens. One old cripple I remember to have seen in the little town of Guines, stiff with wounds received in combat, who had probably got a furlough for life, and who, while limping among his female companions, maintained a sort of strut in his gait, and now and then stopped to crow defiance to the world. The peasants breed game-cocks and bring them to market; amateurs in the town train them for their private amusement. Dealers in game-cocks are as common as horse-jockies with us, and every village has its cock-pit.

I went on Monday to the *Valla de Gallos* , situated in that part of Havana which lies without the walls. Here, in a spacious inclosure, were two amphitheatres of benches, roofed, but without walls, with a circular area in the midst. 368 Each was crowded with people, who were looking at a cockfight, and half of whom seemed vociferating with all their might. I mounted one of the outer benches, and saw one of the birds laid dead by the other in a few minutes. Then was heard the chink of gold and silver pieces, as the betters stepped into the area and paid their wagers; the slain bird was carried out and

Library of Congress

thrown on the ground, and the victor, taken into the hands of his owner, crowed loudly in celebration of his victory. Two other birds were brought in, and the cries of those who offered wagers were heard on all sides. They ceased at last, and the cocks were put down to begin the combat. They fought warily at first, but at length began to strike in earnest, the blood flowed, and the bystanders were heard to vociferate, “*ahí están peleando*”^{*} —“*mata! mata! mata!*”[†] gesticulating at the same time with great violence, and new wagers were laid as the interest of the combat increased. In ten minutes one of the birds was dispatched, for the combat never ends till one of them has his death-wound.

^{*} “Now they are fighting!”

[†] “Kill! kill! kill!”

In the mean time several other combats had begun in smaller pits, which lay within the same inclosure, but were not surrounded with circles of benches. I looked upon the throng engaged in this brutal sport, with eager gestures and loud cries, and could not help thinking how soon this noisy crowd would lie in heaps in the pits of the Campo Santo.

369

In the evening was a masked ball in the Tacon Theatre, a spacious building, one of the largest of its kind in the world. The pit, floored over, with the whole depth of the stage open to the back wall of the edifice, furnished a ballroom of immense size. People in grotesque masks, in hoods or fancy dresses, were mingled with a throng clad in the ordinary costume, and Spanish dances were performed to the music of a numerous band. A well-dressed crowd filled the first and second tier of boxes. The Creole smokes everywhere, and seemed astonished when the soldier who stood at the door ordered him to throw away his lighted segar before entering. Once upon the floor, however, he lighted another segar in defiance of the prohibition.

The Spanish dances, with their graceful movements, resembling the undulations of the sea in its gentlest moods, are nowhere more gracefully performed than in Cuba, by the

young women born on the island. I could not help thinking, however, as I looked on that gay crowd, on the quaint maskers, and the dancers whose flexible limbs seemed swayed to and fro by the breath of the music, that all this was soon to end at the Campo Santo, and I asked myself how many of all this crowd would be huddled uncoffined, when their sports were over, into the foul trenches of the public cemetery.

370

LETTER XLVII. SCENERY OF CUBA.—COFFEE PLANTATIONS.

Matanzas, *April* 16, 1849.

My expectations of the scenery of the island of Cuba and of the magnificence of its vegetation, have not been quite fulfilled. This place is but sixty miles to the east of Havana, but the railway which brings you hither, takes you over a sweep of a hundred and thirty miles, through one of the most fertile districts in the interior of the island. I made an excursion from Havana to San Antonio de los Baños, a pleasant little town at nine leagues distance, in a southeast direction from the capital, in what is called the Vuelta Abajo. I have also just returned from a visit to some fine sugar estates to the southeast of Matanzas, so that I may claim to have seen something of the face of the country of which I speak.

At this season the hills about Havana, and the pastures everywhere, have an arid look, a russet hue, like sandy fields with us, when scorched by a long drought, or like our meadows in winter. This, however, is the dry season; and when I was told that but two showers of rain had fallen since October, I could only wonder that so much 371 vegetation was left, and that the verbenas and other herbage which clothed the ground, should yet retain, as I perceived they did, when I saw them nearer, an unextinguished life. I have, therefore, the disadvantage of seeing Cuba not only in the dry season, but near the close of an uncommonly dry season. Next month the rainy season uommences, when the whole island, I am told, even the barrenest parts, flushes into a deep verdure, creeping plants

Library of Congress

climb over all the rocks and ascend the trees, and the mighty palms put out their new foliage.

Shade, however, is the great luxury of a warm climate, and why the people of Cuba do not surround their habitations in the country, in the villages, and in the environs of the large towns, with a dense umbrage of trees, I confess I do not exactly understand. In their rich soil, and in their perpetually genial climate, trees grow with great rapidity, and they have many noble ones both for size and foliage. The royal palm, with its tall straight columnar trunk of a whitish hue, only uplifts a Corinthian capital of leaves, and casts but a narrow shadow; but it mingles finely with other trees, and planted in avenues, forms a colonnade nobler than any of the porticoes to the ancient Egyptian temples. There is no thicker foliage or fresher green than that of the mango, which daily drops its abundant fruit for several months in the year, and the mamey and the sapote, fruit-trees also, are in leaf during the whole of the dry season; even the Indian fig, which clasps and kills the largest trees of the forest, and at last takes their place, a stately tree with a stout trunk of its own, has its unfading leaf of vivid green.

It is impossible to avoid an expression of impatience that these trees have not been formed into groups, embowering the dwellings, and into groves, through which the beams of the sun, here so fierce at noonday, could not reach the ground beneath. There is in fact nothing of ornamental cultivation in Cuba, except of the most formal kind. Some private gardens there are, carefully kept, but all of the stiffest pattern; there is nothing which brings out the larger vegetation of the region in that grandeur and magnificence which might belong to it. In the Quinta del Obispo, or Bishop's Garden, which is open to the public, you find shade which you find nowhere else, but the trees are planted in straight alleys, and the water-roses, a species of water-lily of immense size, fragrant and pink-colored, grow in a square tank, fed by a straight canal, with sides of hewn stone.

Let me say, however, that when I asked for trees, I was referred to the hurricanes which have recently ravaged the island. One of these swept over Cuba in 1844, uprooting the

Library of Congress

palms and the orange groves, and laying prostrate the avenues of trees on the coffee plantations. The Paseo Isabel, a public promenade, between the walls of Havana and the streets of the new town, was formerly over-canopied with lofty and spreading trees, which this tempest levelled to the ground; it has now been planted with rows of young trees, 373 which yield a meagre shade. In 1846 came another hurricane, still more terrific, destroying much of the beauty which the first had spared.

Of late years, also, such of the orange-trees as were not uprooted, or have recently been planted, have been attacked by the insect which a few years since was so destructive to the same tree in Florida. The effect upon the tree resembles that of a blight, the leaves grow sere, and the branches die. You may imagine, therefore, that I was somewhat disappointed not to find the air, as it is at this season in the south of Italy, fragrant with the odor of orange and lemon blossoms. Oranges are scarce, and not so fine, at this moment, in Havana and Matanzas, as in the fruit-shops of New York. I hear, however, that there are portions of the island which were spared by these hurricanes, and that there are others where the ravages of the insect in the orange groves have nearly ceased, as I have been told is also the case in Florida.

I have mentioned my excursion to San Antonio. I went thither by railway, in a car built at Newark, drawn by an engine made in New York, and worked by an American engineer. For some distance we passed through fields of the sweet-potato, which here never requires a second planting, and propagates itself perpetually in the soil, patches of maize, low groves of bananas with their dark stems, and of plantains with their green ones, and large tracts producing the pineapple growing in rows like carrots. Then came plantations 374 of the sugar-cane, with its sedge-like blades of pale-green, then extensive tracts of pasturage with scattered shrubs and tall dead weeds, the growth of the last summer, and a thin herbage bitten close to the soil. Here and there was an abandoned coffee-plantation, where cattle were browsing among the half-perished shrubs and broken rows of trees; and

Library of Congress

the neglected hedges of the wild pine, *piña raton* , as the Cubans call it, were interrupted with broad gaps.

Sometimes we passed the cottages of the *monteros* , or peasants, built mostly of palm-leaves, the walls formed of the broad sheath of the leaf, fastened to posts of bamboo, and the roof thatched with the long plume-like leaf itself. The door was sometimes hung with a kind of curtain to exclude the sun, which the dusky complexioned women children put aside to gaze at us as we passed. These dwellings were often picturesque in their appearance, with a grove of plantains behind, a thicket of bamboo by the door, waving its willow-like sprays in the wind; a pair of mango-trees near, hung with fruit just ripening and reddish blossoms just opening, and a cocoa-tree or two lifting high above the rest its immense feathery leaves and its clusters of green nuts.

We now and then met the *monteros* themselves scudding along on their little horses, in that pace which we call, a rack. Their dress was a Panama hat, a shirt worn over a pair of pantaloons, a pair of rough cowskin shoes, one of which was armed with a spur, and a sword lashed to the left side by a belt of cotton cloth. They are men of manly bearing, of thin make, but often of a good figure, with wellspread shoulders, which, however, have a stoop in them, contracted, I suppose, by riding always with a short stirrup.

Forests, too, we passed. You, doubtless, suppose that a forest in a soil and climate like this, must be a dense growth of trees with colossal stems and leafy summits. A forest in Cuba—all that I have seen are such—is a thicket of shrubs and creeping plants, through which, one would suppose that even the wild cats of the country would find it impossible to make their way. Above this impassable jungle rises here and there the palm, or the gigantic ceyba. or cotton-tree, but more often trees of far less beauty, thinly scattered and with few branches, disposed without symmetry, and at this season often leafless.

We reached San Antonio at nine o'clock in the morning, and went to the inn of La Punta, where we breakfasted on rice and fresh eggs, and a dish of meat so highly flavored

Library of Congress

with garlic, that it was impossible to distinguish to what animal it belonged. Adjoining the inn was a cockpit, with cells for the birds surrounding the inclosure, in which they were crowing lustily. Two or three persons seemed to have nothing to do but to tend them; and one, in particular, with a gray beard, a grave aspect, and a solid gait, went about the work with a deliberation and solemnity which to me, who had lately seen the hurried burials at the Campo Santo, in Havana, was highly edifying. A man was training a game-cock in the pit; he was giving it lessons in the virtue 376 of perseverance. He held another cock before it, which he was teaching it to pursue, and striking it occasionally over the head to provoke it, with the wing of the bird in his hand, he made it run after him about the area for half an hour together.

I had heard much of the beauty of the coffee estates of Cuba, and in the neighborhood of San Antonio are some which have been reputed very fine ones. A young man, in a checked blue and white shirt, worn like a frock over. checked pantaloons, with a spur on one heel, offered to procure us a *volante*, and we engaged him. He brought us one with two horses, a negro postillion sitting on one, and the shafts of the vehicle borne by the other. We set off, passing through fields guarded by stiff-leaved hedges of the ratoonpine, over ways so bad that if the motion of the volante were not the easiest in the world, we should have taken, an unpleasant jolting. The lands of Cuba fit for cultivation, are divided into red and black; we were in the midst of the red lands, consisting of a fine earth of a deep brick color, resting on a bed of soft, porous, chalky limestone. In the dry season the surface is easily dispersed into dust, and stains your clothes of a dull red.

A drive of four miles, through a country full of palm and cocoanut trees, brought us to the gate of a coffee plantation, which our friend in the checked shirt, by whom we were accompanied, opened for us. We passed up to the house through what had been an avenue of palms, but was now 377 two rows of trees at very unequal distances, with here and there a sickly orange-tree. On each side grew the coffee shrubs, hung with flowers of snowy white, but unpruned and full of dry and leafless twigs. In every direction were ranks of trees, prized for ornament or for their fruit, and shrubs, among which were magnificent

Library of Congress

oleanders loaded with flowers, planted in such a manner as to break the force of the wind, and partially to shelter the plants from the too fierce rays of the sun. The coffee estate is, in fact, a kind of forest, with the trees and shrubs arranged in straight lines. The *mayoral*, or steward of the estate, a handsome Cuban, with white teeth, a pleasant smile, and a distinct utterance of his native language, received us with great courtesy, and offered us *cigarillos*, though he never used tobacco; and spirit of cane, though he never drank. He wore a sword, and carried a large flexible whip, doubled for convenience in the band. He showed us the coffee plants, the broad platforms with smooth surfaces of cement and raised borders, where the berries were dried in the sun, and the mills where the negroes were at work separating the kernel from the pulp in which it is inclosed.

"These coffee estates," said he, "are already ruined, and the planters are abandoning them as fast as they can; in four years more there will not be a single coffee plantation on the island. They can not afford to raise coffee for the price they get in the market."

I inquired the reason. "It is," replied he, "the extreme 22* 378 dryness of the season when the plant is in flower. If we have rain at this time of the year; we are sure of a good crop; if it does not rain, the harvest is small; and the failure of rain is so common a circumstance that we must leave the cultivation of coffee to the people of St. Domingo and Brazil."

I asked if the plantation could not be converted into a sugar estate.

"Not this," he answered; "it has been cultivated too long. The land was originally rich, but it is exhausted"—tired out, was the expression he used—"we may cultivate maize or rice, for the dry culture of rice succeeds well here, or we may abandon it to grazing. At present we keep a few negroes here, just to gather the berries which ripen, without taking any trouble to preserve the plants, or replace those which die."

I could easily believe from what I saw on this estate, that there must be a great deal of beauty of vegetation in a wellkept coffee plantation, but the formal pattern in which it is disposed, the straight alleys and rows of trees, the squares and parallelograms, showed

Library of Congress

me that there was no beauty of arrangement. We fell in, before we returned to our inn, with the proprietor, a delicate-looking person, with thin white hands, who had been educated at Boston, and spoke English as if he had never lived anywhere else. His manners, compared with those of his steward, were exceedingly frosty and forbidding, and when we told him of the 379 civility which had been shown us, his looks seemed to say he wished it had been otherwise.

Returning to our inn, we dined, and as the sun grew low, we strolled out to look at the town. It is situated on a clear little stream, over which several bathing-houses are built, their posts standing in the midst of the current. Above the town, it flows between rocky banks, bordered with shrubs, many of them in flower. Below the town, after winding a little Way, it enters a cavern yawning in the limestone rock, immediately over which a huge ceyba rises, and stretches its leafy arms in mid-heaven. Down this opening the river throws itself, and is never seen again. This is not a singular instance in Cuba. The island is full of caverns and openings in the rocks, and I am told that many of the streams find subterranean passages to the sea. There is a well at the inn of La Punta, in which a roaring of water is constantly heard. It is the sound of a subterranean stream rushing along a passage in the rocks, and the well is an opening into its roof.

In passing through the town, I was struck with the neat attire of those who inhabited the humblest dwellings. At the door of one of the cottages, I saw a group of children, of different ages, all quite pretty, with oval faces and glittering black eyes, in clean fresh dresses, which, one would think, could scarcely have been kept a moment without being soiled, in that dwelling, with its mud floor. The people of Cuba are sparing in their ablutions; the men do not wash 380 their faces and hands till nearly mid-day, for fear of spasms; and of the women, I am told that many do not wash at all, contenting themselves with rubbing their cheeks and necks with a little aguardiente; but the passion for clean linen, and, among the men, for clean white pantaloons, is universal. The *montero* himself,

on a holiday or any public occasion, will sport a shirt of the finest linen, smoothly ironed, and stiffly starched throughout, from the collar downward.

The next day, at half-past eleven, we left our inn, which was also what we call in the United States a country store, where the clerks, who had just performed their ablutions and combed their hair, were making segars behind the counter from the tobacco of the Vuelta Abajo, and returned by the railway to Havana. We procured travelling licenses at the cost of four dollars and a half each, for it is the pleasure of the government to levy this tax on strangers who travel, and early the following morning took the train for Matanzas.

381

LETTER XLVIII. MATANZAS—VALLEY OF YUMURI

Los Guines, *April* 18, 1849.

In the long circuit of railway which leads from Havana to Matanzas, I saw nothing remarkably different from what I observed on my excursion to San Antonio. There was the same smooth country, of great apparent fertility, sometimes varied with gentle undulations, and sometimes rising, in the distance, into hills covered with thickets. We swept by dark-green fields planted with the yuca, an esculent root, of which the cassava bread is made, pale-green fields of the cane, brown tracts of pasturage, partly formed of abandoned coffee estates where the palms and scattered fruit-trees were yet standing, and forests of shrubs and twining plants growing for the most part among rocks. Some of these rocky tracts have a peculiar appearance; they consist of rough projections of rock a foot or two in height, of irregular shape and full of holes; these are called *diente de perro*, or dog's teeth. Here the trees and creepers find openings filled with soil, by which they are nourished. We passed two or three country cemeteries, where that foulest of birds, the turkey-vulture, was seen sitting on the white stuccoed 382 walls, or hovering on his ragged wings in circles above them.

Library of Congress

In passing over the neighborhood of the town in which I am now writing, I found myself on the black lands of the island. Here the rich dark earth of the plain lies on a bed of chalk as white as snow, as was apparent where the earth had been excavated to a little depth, on each side of the railway, to form the causey on which it ran. Streams of clear water, diverted from a river to the left, traversed the plain with a swift current, almost even with the surface of the soil, which they keep in perpetual freshness. As we approached Matanzas, we saw more extensive tracts of cane clothing the broad slopes with their dense blades, as if the coarse sedge of a river had been transplanted to the uplands.

At length the bay of Matanzas opened before us; a long tract of water stretching to the northeast, into which several rivers empty themselves. The town lay at the southwestern extremity, sheltered by hills, where the San Juan and the Yumuri pour themselves into the brine. It is a small but prosperous town, with a considerable trade, as was indicated by the vessels at anchor in the harbor.

As we passed along the harbor I remarked an extensive, healthy-looking orchard of plantains growing on one of those tracts which they call *diente de perro*. I could see nothing but the jagged teeth of whitish rock, and the green swelling stems of the plantain, from ten to fifteen feet in height, 383 and as large as a man's leg, or larger. The stalks of the plantain are juicy and herbaceous, and of so yielding a texture, that with a sickle you might entirely sever the largest of them at a single stroke. How such a multitude of succulent plants could find nourishment on what seemed to the eye little else than barren rock, I could not imagine.

The day after arriving at Matanzas we made an excursion on horseback to the summit of the hill, immediately overlooking the town, called the Cumbre. Light hardy horses of the country were brought us, with high pommels to the saddles, which are also raised behind in a manner making it difficult to throw the rider from his seat. A negro fitted a spur to my right heel, and mounting by the short stirrups, I crossed the river Yumuri with my companions, and began to climb the Cumbre. They boast at Matanzas of the perpetual

Library of Congress

coolness of temperature enjoyed upon the broad summit of this hill, where many of the opulent merchants of the town have their country houses, to which the mosquitoes and the intermittents that infest the town below, never come, and where, as one of them told me, you may play at billiards in August without any inconvenient perspiration.

From the Cumbre you behold the entire extent of the harbor; the town lies below you with its thicket of masts, and its dusty *paseo*, where rows of the Cuba pine stand rooted in the red soil. On the opposite shore your eye is attracted to a chasm between high rocks, where the river 384 Canimar comes forth through banks of romantic beauty so they are described to me—and mingles with the sea. But the view to the west was much finer; there lay the valley of the Yumuri, and a sight of it is worth a voyage to the island. In regard to this my expectations suffered no disappointment.

Before me lay a deep valley, surrounded on all sides by hills and mountains, with the little river Yumuri twining at the bottom. Smooth round hillocks rose from the side next to me, covered with clusters of palms, and the steeps of the southeastern corner of the valley were clothed with a wood of intense green, where I could almost see the leaves glisten in the sunshine. The broad fields below were waving with cane and maize, and cottages of the *monteros* were scattered among them, each with its tuft of bamboos and its little grove of plantains. In some parts the cliffs almost seemed to impend over the valley; but to the west, in a soft golden haze, rose summit behind summit, and over them all, loftiest and most remote, towered the mountain called the *Pan de Matanzas*.

We stopped for a few moments at a country seat on the top of the Cumbre, where this beautiful view lay ever before the eye. Round it, in a garden, were cultivated the most showy plants of the tropics, but my attention was attracted to a little plantation of damask roses blooming profusely. They were scentless; the climate which supplies the orange blossom with intense odors exhausts the 385 fragrance of the rose. At nightfall—the night falls suddenly in this latitude—we were again at our hotel.

Library of Congress

We passed our Sunday on a sugar estate at the hospitable mansion of a planter from the United States about fifteen miles from Matanzas. The house stands on an eminence, once embowered in trees which the hurricanes have leveled, overlooking a broad valley, where palms were scattered in every direction; for the estate had formerly been a coffee plantation. In the huge buildings containing the machinery and other apparatus for making sugar, which stood at the foot of the eminence, the power of steam, which had been toiling all the week, was now at rest. As the hour of sunset approached, a smoke was seen rising from its chimney, presently puffs of vapor issued from the engine, its motion began to be heard, and the negroes, men and women, were summoned to begin the work of the week. Some fed the fire under the boiler with coal; others were seen rushing to the mill with their arms full of the stalks of the cane, freshly cut, which they took from a huge pile near the building; others lighted fires under a row of huge cauldrons, with the dry stalks of cane from which the juice had been crushed by the mill. It was a spectacle of activity such as I had not seen in Cuba.

The sound of the engine was heard all night, for the work of grinding the cane, once begun, proceeds day and night, with the exception of Sundays and some other holidays. I was early next morning at the mill. A current 386 of cane juice was flowing from the rollers in a long trunk to a vat in which it was clarified with lime; it was then made to pass successively from one seething cauldron to another, as it obtained a thicker consistence by boiling. The negroes, with huge ladles turning on pivots, swept it from cauldron to cauldron, and finally passed it into a trunk, which conveyed it to shallow tanks in another apartment, where it cooled into sugar. From these another set of workmen scooped it up in moist masses, carried it in buckets up a low flight of stairs, and poured it into rows of hogsheads pierced with holes at the bottom. These are placed over a large tank, into which the moisture dripping from the hogsheads is collected and forms molasses.

This is the method of making the sugar called Muscovado. It is drained a few days, and then the railways take it to Matanzas or to Havana. We visited afterward a plantation in the

Library of Congress

neighborhood, in which clayed sugar is made. Our host furnished us with horses to make the excursion, and we took a winding road, over hill and valley, by plantations and forests, till we stopped at the gate of an extensive pasture-ground. An old negro, whose hut was at hand, opened it for us, and bowed low as we passed. A ride of half a mile further brought us in sight of the cane-fields of the plantation called Saratoga, belonging to the house of Drake & Company, of Havana, and reputed one of the finest of the island. It had a different aspect from any plantation we had seen. Trees and shrubs there were none, but the 387 canes, except where they had been newly cropped for the mill, clothed the slopes and hollows with their light-green blades, like the herbage of a prairie.

We were kindly received by the administrator of the estate, an intelligent Biscayan, who showed us the whole process of making clayed sugar. It does not differ from that of making the Muscovado, so far as concerns the grinding and boiling. When, however, the sugar is nearly cool, it is poured into iron vessels of conical shape, with the point downward, at which is an opening. The top of the sugar is then covered with a sort of black thick mud, which they call clay, and which is several times renewed as it becomes dry. The moisture from the clay passes through the sugar, carrying with it the cruder portions, which form molasses. In a few days the draining is complete.

We saw the work-people of the Saratoga estate preparing for the market the sugar thus cleansed, if we may apply the word to such a process. With a rude iron blade they cleft the large loaf of sugar just taken from the mould into three parts, called first, second, and third quality, according to their whiteness. These are dried in the sun on separate platforms of wood with a raised edge; the women standing and walking over the fragments with their bare dirty feet, and beating them smaller with wooden mallets and clubs. The sugar of the first quality is then scraped up and put into boxes; that of the second and third, being moister, is handled a third time and carried into the drying-room, 388 where it is exposed to the heat of a stove, and when sufficiently dry, is boxed up for market like the other.

The sight of these processes was not of a nature to make one think with much satisfaction of clayed sugar as an ingredient of food, but the inhabitants of the island are superior to such prejudices, and use it with as little scruple as they who do not know in what manner it is made.

In the afternoon we returned to the dwelling of our American host, and taking the train at *Caobas* , or Mahogany Trees—so called from the former growth of that tree on the spot—we were at Matanzas an hour afterward. The next morning the train brought us to this little town, situated half-way between Matanzas and Havana, but a considerable distance to the south of either.

389

LETTER XLIX. NEGROES IN CUBA.—INDIAN SLAVES.

Havana, *April 22*, 1849.

The other day when we were at Guines, we heard that a negro was to suffer death early the next morning by the *garrote* , an instrument by which the neck of the criminal is broken and life extinguished in an instant. I asked our landlady for what crime the man had been condemned.

“He killed his master,” she replied, “an old man, in his bed.”

“Had he received any provocation?”

“Not that I have heard; but another slave is to be put to death by the garrote in about a fortnight, whose offense had some palliation. His master was a man of harsh temper, and treated his slaves with extreme severity; the negro watched his opportunity, and shot him as he sat at table.”

Library of Congress

We went to the place of execution a little before eight o'clock, and found the preparations already made. A platform had been erected, on which stood a seat for the prisoner, and back of the seat a post was fixed, with a sort of iron collar for his neck. A screw, with a long transverse handle on the side of the post opposite to the collar, was so contrived that, when it was turned, it would push forward an iron bolt against the back of the neck and crush the spine at once.

Sentinels in uniform were walking to and fro, keeping the spectators at a distance from the platform. The heat of the sun was intense, for the sea-breeze had not yet sprung up, but the crowd had begun to assemble. As near to the platform as they could come, stood a group of young girls, two of whom were dressed in white and one was pretty, with no other shade for their dusky faces than their black veils, chatting and laughing and stealing occasional glances at the new-comers. In another quarter were six or eight monteros on horseback, in their invariable costume of Panama hats, shirts and pantaloons, with holsters to their saddles, and most of them with swords lashed to their sides.

About half-past eight a numerous crowd made its appearance coming from the town. Among them walked with a firm step, a large black man, dressed in a long white frock, white pantaloons, and a white cap with a long peak which fell backward on his shoulders. He was the murderer; his hands were tied together by the wrists; in one of them he held a crucifix; the rope by which they were fastened was knotted around his waist, and the end of it was held by another athletic negro, dressed in blue cotton with white facings, who walked behind him. On the left of the criminal walked an officer of justice; on his right an ecclesiastic, slender and stooping, in a black gown and a black cap, the top of which was formed into a sort of coronet, exhorting the criminal, in a loud voice and with many gesticulations, to repent and trust in the mercy of God.

When they reached the platform, the negro was made to place himself on his knees before it, the priest continuing his exhortations, and now and then clapping him, in an encouraging manner, on the shoulder. I saw the man shake his head once or twice,

Library of Congress

and then kiss the crucifix. In the mean time a multitude, of all ages and both sexes, took possession of the places from which the spectacle could be best seen. A stone-fence, such as is common in our country, formed of loose stones taken from the surface of the ground, upheld a long row of spectators. A well-dressed couple, a gentleman in -white pantaloons, and a lady elegantly attired, with a black lace veil and a parasol, bringing their two children and two colored servants, took their station by my side—the elder child found a place on the top of the fence, and the younger, about four years of age, was lifted in the arms of one of the servants, that it might have the full benefit of the spectacle.

The criminal was then raised from the ground, and going up the platform took the seat ready for him. The priest here renewed his exhortations, and, at length, turning to the audience, said, in a loud voice, “I believe in God Almighty and in Jesus Christ his only Son, and it grieves me to the heart to have offended them.” These 392 words, I suppose, were meant, as the confession of the criminal, to be repeated after the priest, but I heard no response from his lips. Again and again the priest repeated them, the third time with a louder voice than ever; the signal was then given to the executioner. The iron collar was adjusted to the neck of the victim, and fastened under the chin. The athletic negro in blue, standing behind the post, took the handle of the screw and turned it deliberately. After a few turns, the criminal gave a sudden shrug of the shoulders; another turn of the screw, and a shudder ran over his whole frame, his eyes rolled wildly, his hands, still tied with the rope, were convulsively jerked upward, and then dropped back to their place motionless forever. The priest advanced and turned the peak of the white cap over the face to hide it from the sight of the multitude.

I had never seen, and never intended to see an execution, but the strangeness of this manner of inflicting death, and the desire to witness the behavior of an assembly of the people of Cuba on such an occasion, had overcome my previous determination. The horror of the spectacle now caused me to regret that I made one of a crowd drawn to look at it by an idle curiosity.

Library of Congress

The negro in blue now stepped forward and felt the limbs of the dead man one by one, to ascertain whether life were wholly extinct, and then returning to the screw, gave it two or three turns more, as if to make his work sure. In 393 the mean time my attention was attracted by a sound like that of a light buffet and a whimpering voice near me. I looked, and two men were standing by me, with a little white boy at their side, and a black boy of nearly the same age before them, holding his hat in his hand, and crying They were endeavoring to direct his attention to what they considered the wholesome spectacle before him. “ *Mira, mira, no te hará dañ* ,”^{*} said the men, but the boy steadily refused to look in that direction, though he was evidently terrified by some threat of punishment and his eyes filled with tears. Finding him obstinate, they desisted from their purpose, and I was quite edified to see the little fellow continue to look away from the spectacle which attracted all other eyes but his. The white boy now came forward, touched the hat of the little black, and goodnaturedly saying “ *pontelo, pontelo* ,”[†] made him put it on his head.

^{*} “Look, look, it will do you no harm.”

[†] “Put it on, put it on.”

The crowd now began to disperse, and in twenty minutes the place was nearly solitary, except the sentinels pacing backward and forward. Two hours afterward the sentinels were pacing there yet, and the dead man, in his white dress and iron collar, was still in his seat on the platform.

It is generally the natives of Africa by whom these 394 murders are committed; the negroes born in the country are of a more yielding temper. They have better learned the art of avoiding punishment, and submit to it more patiently when inflicted, having understood from their birth that it is one of the conditions of their existence. The whip is always in sight. “Nothing can be done without it,” said an Englishman to me, who had lived eleven years on the island, “you can not make the negroes work by the mild methods which are used by slaveholders in the United States; the blacks there are far

Library of Congress

more intelligent and more easily governed by moral means.” Africans, the living witnesses of the present existence of the slave-trade, are seen everywhere; at every step you meet blacks whose cheeks are scarred with parallel slashes, with which they were marked in the African slave-market, and who can not even speak the mutilated Spanish current in the mouths of the Cuba negroes.

One day I stood upon the quay at Matanzas and saw the slaves unloading the large lighters which brought goods from the Spanish ships lying in the harbor—casks of wine, jars of oil, bags of nuts, barrels of flour. The men were naked to the hips; their only garment being a pair of trowsers. I admired their ample chests, their massive shoulders, the full and muscular proportions of their arms, and the ease with which they shifted the heavy articles from place to place, or carried them on their heads. “Some of these are Africans?” I said to a gentleman who resided on the island. 395 “They are all Africans,” he answered, “Africans to a man; the negro born in Cuba is of a lighter make.”

When I was at Guines, I went out to look at a sugar estate in the neighborhood, where the mill was turned by water, which a long aqueduct, from one of the streams that traverse the plain, conveyed over arches of stone so broad and massive that I could not help thinking of the aqueducts of Rome. A gang of black women were standing in the *secadero* or drying-place, among the lumps of clayed sugar, beating them small with mallets; before them walked to and fro the major-domo, with a cutlass by his side and a whip in his hand. I asked him how a planter could increase his stock of slaves. “There is no difficulty,” he replied, “slaves are still brought to the island from Africa. The other day five hundred were landed on the sea-shore to the south of this; for you must know, Señor, that we are but three or four leagues from the coast.”

“Was it done openly?” I inquired.

“ *Publicamente* , Señor, *publicamente*; * they were landed on the sugar estate of *El Pastor* , and one hundred and seven more died on the passage from Africa.”

Library of Congress

* "Publicly, sir, publicly."

"Did the government know of it?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Of course the government knows it," said he; "every body else knows it."

The truth is, that the slave-trade is now fully revived; 396 the government conniving at it, making a profit on the slaves imported from Africa, and screening from the pursuit of the English the pirates who bring them. There could scarcely be any arrangement of coast more favorable for smuggling slaves into a country, than the islands and long peninsulas, and many channels of the southern shore of Cuba. Here the mangrove thickets, sending down roots into the brine from their long branches that stretch over the water, form dense screens on each side of the passages from the main ocean to the inland, and render it easy for the slaver and his boats to lurk undiscovered by the English men-of-war.

During the comparative cessation of the slave-trade a few years since, the negroes, I have been told, were much better treated than before. They rose in value, and when they died, it was found not easy to supply their places; they were therefore made much of, and every thing was done which it was thought would tend to preserve their health, and maintain them in bodily vigor. If the slave-trade should make them cheap again, their lives of course will be of less consequence to their owners, and they will be subject again to be overtasked, as it has been said they were before. There is certainly great temptation to wear them out in the sugar mills, which are kept in motion day and night, during half the year, namely, through the dry season. "If this was not the healthiest employment in the world," said an overseer to me on one of the sugar estates, "it 397 would kill us all who are engaged in it, both black and white."

Perhaps you may not know that more than half of the island of Cuba has never been reduced to tillage. Immense tracts of the rich black or red mould of the island, accumulated

Library of Congress

on the coral rock, are yet, waiting the hand of the planter to be converted into profitable sugar estates. There is a demand, therefore, for laborers on the part of those who wish to become planters, and this demand is supplied not only from the coast of Africa, but from the American continent and southwestern Asia.

In one of the afternoons of Holy Week, I saw amid the crowd on the *Plaza de Armas*, in Havana, several men of low stature, of a deep-olive complexion, beardless, with high cheek-bones and straight black hair, dressed in white pantaloons of cotton, and shirts of the same material worn over them. They were Indians, natives of Yucatan, who had been taken prisoners of war by the whites of the country and sold to white men in Cuba, under a pretended contract to serve for a certain number of years. I afterward learned, that the dealers in this sort of merchandise were also bringing in the natives of Asia, Chinese they call them here, though I doubt whether they belong to that nation, and disposing of their services to the planters. There are six hundred of these people, I have been told, in this city.

Yesterday appeared in the Havana papers an ordinance concerning the "Indians and Asiatics imported into the 34 398 country under a contract to labor." It directs how much Indian corn, how many plantains, how much jerked-pork and rice they shall receive daily, and how many lashes the master may inflict for misbehavior. Twelve stripes with the cowskin he may administer for the smaller offenses, and twenty-four for transgressions of more importance; but if any more become necessary, he must apply to a magistrate for permission to lay them on. Such is the manner in which the government of Cuba sanctions the barbarity of making slaves of the freeborn men of Yucatan. The ordinance, however, betrays great concern for the salvation of the souls of those whom it thus delivers over to the lash of the slave-driver. It speaks of the Indians from America, as Christians already, but while it allows the slaves imported from Asia to be flogged, it directs that they shall be carefully instructed in the doctrines of our holy religion.

Library of Congress

Yet the policy of the government favors emancipation. The laws of Cuba permit any slave to purchase his freedom on paying a price fixed by three persons, one appointed by his master and two by a magistrate. He may, also, if he pleases, compel his master to sell him a certain portion of his time, which he may employ to earn the means of purchasing his entire freedom.

It is owing to this, I suppose, that the number of free blacks is so large in the island, and it is manifest that if the slave-trade could be checked, and these laws remain unaltered, the negroes would gradually emancipate themselves 399—all at least who would be worth keeping as servants. The population of Cuba is now about a million and a quarter, rather more than half of whom are colored persons, and one out of every four of the colored population is free. The mulattoes emancipate themselves as a matter of course, and some of them become rich by the occupations they follow. The prejudice of color is by no means so strong here as in the United States. Five or six years since the negroes were shouting and betting in the cockpits with the whites; but since the mulatto insurrection, as it is called, in 1843, the law forbids their presence at such amusements. I am told there is little difficulty in smuggling people of mixed blood, by the help of legal forms, into the white race, and if they are rich, into good society, provided their hair is not frizzled.

You hear something said now and then in the United States concerning the annexation of Cuba to our confederacy; you may be curious, perhaps, to know what they say of it here. A European who had long resided in the island, gave me this account:

“The Creoles, no doubt, would be very glad to see Cuba annexed to the United States, and many of them ardently desire it. It would relieve them from many great burdens they now bear, open their commerce to the world, rid them of a tyrannical government, and allow them to manage their own affairs in their own way. But Spain derives from the possession of Cuba advantages too great to be relinquished. 400 She extracts from Cuba a revenue of twelve millions of dollars; her government sends its needy nobility, and all for whom it would provide, to fill lucrative offices in Cuba—the priests, the military officers, the

Library of Congress

civil authorities, every man who fills a judicial post or holds a clerkship is from old Spain. The Spanish government dares not give up Cuba if it were inclined.

“Nor will the people of Cuba make any effort to emancipate themselves by taking up arms. The struggle with the power of Spain would be bloody and uncertain, even if the white population were united, but the mutual distrust with which the planters and the peasantry regard each other, would make the issue of such an enterprise still more doubtful. At present it would not be safe for a Cuba planter to speak publicly of annexation to the United States. He would run the risk of being imprisoned or exiled.”

Of course, if Cuba were to be annexed to the United States, the slave trade with Africa would cease to be carried on as now, though its perfect suppression might be found difficult. Negroes would be imported in large numbers from the United States, and planters would emigrate with them. Institutions of education would be introduced, commerce and religion would both be made free, and the character of the islanders would be elevated by the responsibilities which a free government would throw upon them. The planters, however, would doubtless adopt regulations insuring the perpetuity of slavery; they would unquestionably, as soon as they were allowed to frame ordinances for the island, take away the facilities which the present laws give the slave for effecting his own emancipation. 34*

402

LETTER L. ENGLISH EXHIBITIONS OF WORKS OF ART.

London, *July 7*, 1849.

I Have just been to visit a gallery of drawings in water colors, now open for exhibition. The English may be almost said to have created this branch of art. Till within a few years, delineations in water-colors, on drawing paper, have been so feeble and meagre as to be held in little esteem, but the English artists have shown that as much, though in a somewhat different way, may be done on drawing-paper as on canvas; that as high a

Library of Congress

degree of expression may be reached, as much strength given to the coloring, and as much boldness to the lights and shadows. In the collection of which I speak, are about four hundred drawings not before exhibited. Those which appeared to me the most remarkable, though not in the highest department of art, were still-life pieces by Hunt. It seems to me impossible to carry pictorial illusion to a higher pitch than he has attained. A sprig of hawthorn flowers, freshly plucked, lies before you, and you are half-tempted to take it up and inhale its fragrance; those speckled eggs in the bird's nest, you are sure you might, if you pleased, take into your hand; 403 that tuft of ivy leaves and buds is so complete an optical deception, that you can hardly believe that it has not been attached by some process to the paper on which you see it. A servant girl, in a calico gown, with a broom, by the same artist, and a young woman standing at a window, at which the light is streaming in, are as fine in their way, and as perfect imitations of every-day nature, as you see in the works of the best Flemish painters.

It is to landscape, however, that the artists in watercolors have principally devoted their attention. There are several very fine ones in the collection by Copley Fielding, the foregrounds drawn with much strength, the distant objects softly blending with the atmosphere as in nature, and a surprising depth and transparency given to the sky. Alfred Fripp and George Fripp have also produced some very fine landscapes—mills, waters in foam or sleeping in pellucid pools, and the darkness of the tempest in contrast with gleams of sunshine. Oakley has some spirited groups of gipsies and country people, and there are several of a similar kind by Taylor, who designs and executes with great force. One of the earliest of the new school of artists in water-colors is Prout, whose drawings are principally architectural, and who has shown how admirably suited this new style of art is to the delineation of the rich carvings of Gothic churches. Most of the finer pieces, I observed, were marked 'sold;' they brought prices varying from thirty to fifty guineas.

404

There is an exhibition now open of the paintings of Etty, who stands high in the world of art as an historical painter. The "Society of the Arts"—I believe that is its name— every year

Library of Congress

gets up an exhibition of the works of some eminent painter, with the proceeds of which it buys one of his pictures, and places it in the National Gallery. This is a very effectual plan of forming in time a various and valuable collection of the works of British artists.

The greatest work of Etty is the series representing the Death of Holofernes by the hand of Judith. It consists of three paintings, the first of which shows Judith in prayer before the execution of her purpose; in the next, and the finest, she is seen standing by the couch of the heathen warrior, with the sword raised to heaven, to which she turns her eyes, as if imploring supernatural assistance; and in the third, she appears issuing from the tent, bearing the head of the ravager of her country, which she conceals from the armed attendants who stand on guard at the entrance, and exhibits to her astonished handmaid, who has been waiting the result. The subject is an old one, but Etty has treated it in a new way, and given it a moral interest, which the old painters seem not to have thought of. In the delineation of the naked human figure, Etty is allowed to surpass all the English living artists, and his manner of painting flesh is thought to be next to that of Rubens. His reputation for these qualities has influenced his choice of subjects in a remarkable manner. The walls of the exhibition 405 were covered with Venuses and Eves, Cupids and Psyches, and nymphs innocent of drapery, reclining on couches, or admiring their own beauty reflected in clear fountains. I almost thought myself in the midst of a collection made for the Grand Seignior.

The annual exhibition of the Royal Academy is now open. Its general character is mediocrity, unrelieved by any works of extraordinary or striking merit. There are some clever landscapes by the younger Danbys, and one by the father, which is by no means among his happiest—a dark picture, which in half a dozen years will be one mass of black paint. Cooper, almost equal to Paul Potter as a cattle painter, contributes some good pieces of that kind, and one of them, in which the cattle are from his pencil, and the landscape from that of Lee, appeared to me the finest thing in the collection. There is, however, a picture by Leslie, which his friends insist is the best in the exhibition. It represents the chaplain of the Duke leaving the table in a rage, after an harangue by Don

Library of Congress

Quixote in praise of knight-errantry. The suppressed mirth of the Duke and Duchess, the sly looks of the servants, the stormy anger of the ecclesiastic, and the serene gravity of the knight, are well expressed; but there is a stiffness in some of the figures which makes them look as if copied from the wooden models in the artist's study, and a raw and crude appearance in the handling, so that you are reminded of the brush every time you look at the painting. To do Leslie justice, 406 however, his paintings ripen wonderfully, and seem to acquire a finish with years.

If one wishes to form an idea of the vast numbers of indifferent paintings which are annually produced in England, he should visit, as I did, another exhibition, a large gallery lighted from above, in which each artist, most of them of the younger or obscurer class, takes a certain number of feet on the wall and exhibits just what he pleases. Every man is his own hanging committee, and if his pictures are not placed in the most advantageous position, it is his own fault. Here acres of canvas are exhibited, most of which is spoiled of course, though here and there a good picture is to be seen, and others which give promise of future merit.

Enough of pictures. The principal subject of political discussion since I have been in England, has been the expediency of allowing Jews to sit in Parliament. You have seen by what a large majority Baron Rothschild has been again returned from the city of London, after his resignation, in spite of the zealous opposition of the conservatives. It is allowed, I think, on all hands, that the majority of the nation are in favor of allowing Jews to hold seats in Parliament, but the other side urge the inconsistency of maintaining a Christian Church as a state institution, and admitting the enemies of Christianity to a share in its administration. Public opinion, however, is so strongly against political disabilities on account of religious 407 faith, that with the aid of the ministry, it will, no doubt, triumph, and we shall see another class of adversaries of the Establishment making war upon it in the House of Commons. Nor will it be at all surprising if, after a little while, we hear of Jewish

barons, earls, and marquises in the House of Peers. Rothschild himself may become the founder of a noble line, opulent beyond the proudest of them all.

The protectionist party here are laboring to persuade the people that the government have committed a great error, in granting such liberal conditions to the trade of other nations, to the prejudice of British industry. They do not, however, seem to make much impression on the public mind. The necessities of life are obtained at a cheaper rate than formerly, and that satisfies the people. Peel has been making a speech in Parliament on the free-trade question, which I often hear referred to as a very able argument for the free-trade policy, Neither on this question nor on that of the Jewish disabilities, do the opposition seem to have the country with them.

408

LETTER LI. A VISIT TO THE SHETLAND ISLES.

Aberdeen, *July* 19, 1849.

Two days ago I was in the Orkneys; the day before I was in the Shetland Isles, the “farthest Thule” of the Romans, where I climbed the Noup of the Noss, as the famous headland of the island of Noss is called, from which you look out upon the sea that lies between Shetland and Norway.

From Wick, a considerable fishing town in Caithness, on the northern coast of Scotland, a steamer, named the Queen, departs once a week, in the summer months, for Kirkwall, in the Orkneys, and Lerwick, in Shetland. We went on board of her about ten o'clock on the 14th of July. The herring fishery had just begun, and the artificial port of Wick, constructed with massive walls of stone, was crowded with fishing vessels which had returned that morning from the labors of the night; for in the herring fishery it is only in the night that the nets are spread and drawn. Many of the vessels had landed their cargo; in others the fishermen were busily disengaging the herrings from the black nets and throwing them in heaps; and now and then 409 a boat later than the rest, was entering from the sea. The

Library of Congress

green heights all around the bay were covered with groups of women, sitting or walking, dressed for the most part in caps and white short gowns, waiting for the arrival of the boats manned by their husbands and brothers, or belonging to the families of those who had come to seek occupation as fishermen. I had seen two or three of the principal streets of Wick that morning, swarming with strapping fellows, in blue highland bonnets, with blue jackets and pantaloons, and coarse blue flannel shirts. A shopkeeper, standing at his door, instructed me who they were.

“They are men of the Celtic race,” he said—the term Celtic has grown to be quite fashionable, I find, when applied to the Highlanders. “They came from the Hebrides and other parts of western Scotland, to get employment in the herring fishery. These people have travelled perhaps three hundred miles, most of them on foot, to be employed six or seven weeks, for which they will receive about six pounds wages. Those whom you see are not the best of their class; the more enterprising and industrious have boats of their own, and carry on the fishery on their own account.”

We found the Queen a strong steamboat, with a good cabin and convenient state-rooms, but dirty, and smelling of fish from stem to stern. It has seemed to me that the further north I went, the more dirt I found. Our captain was an old Aberdeen seaman, with a stoop in his shoulders, and 35 410 looked as if he was continually watching for land, an occupation for which the foggy climate of these latitudes gives him full scope. We left Wick between eleven and twelve o'clock in the forenoon, and glided over a calm sea, with a cloudless sky above us, and a thin haze on the surface of the waters. The haze thickened to a fog, which grew more and more dense, and finally closed overhead. After about three hours sail, the captain began to grow uneasy, and was seen walking about on the bridge between the wheel-houses, anxiously peering into the mist, on the lookout for the coast of the Orkneys. At length he gave up the search, and stopped the engine. The passengers amused themselves with fishing. Several coal-fish, a large fish of slender shape, were caught, and one fine cod was hauled up by a gentleman who united in his person, as he gave me to understand, the two capacities of portrait-painter and preacher of the gospel,

Library of Congress

and who held that the universal church of Christendom had gone sadly astray from the true primitive doctrine, in regard to the time when the millennium is to take place.

The fog cleared away in the evening; our steamer was again in motion; we landed at Kirkwall in the middle of the night, and when I went on deck the next morning, we were smoothly passing the shores of Fair Isle—high and steep rocks impending over the waters, with a covering of green turf. Before they were out of sight we saw the Shetland coast, the dark rock of Sumburgh Head, and behind it, half shrouded in mist, the promontory of Fitfiel Head,—Fitful Head, as it is called by Scott, in his novel of the Pirate. Beyond, to the east, black rocky promontories came in sight, one after the other, beetling over the sea. At ten o'clock, we were passing through a channel between the islands leading to Lerwick, the capital of Shetland, on the principal island bearing the name of Mainland. Fields, yellow with flowers, among which stood here and there a cottage, sloped softly down to the water, and beyond them rose the bare declivities and summits of the hills, dark with heath, with here and there still darker spots, of an almost inky hue, where peat had been cut for fuel. Not a tree, not a shrub was to be seen, and the greater part of the soil appeared never to have been reduced to cultivation.

About one o'clock we cast anchor before Lerwick, a fishing village, built on the shore of Bressay Sound, which here forms one of the finest harbors in the world. It has two passages to the sea, so that when the wind blows a storm on one side of the islands, the Shetlander in his boat passes out in the other direction, and finds himself in comparatively smooth water. It was Sunday, and the man who landed us at the quay and took our baggage to our lodgings, said as he left us—

"It's the Sabbath, and I'll no tak' my pay now, but I'll call the morrow. My name is Jim Sinclair, pilot, and if ye'll be wanting to go anywhere, I'll be glad to tak' ye in 412 my boat." In a few minutes we were snugly established at our lodgings. There is no inn throughout all the Shetland Islands, which contain about thirty thousand inhabitants, but if any of my friends should have occasion to visit Lerwick, I can cheerfully recommend to them the

Library of Congress

comfortable lodging-house of Mrs. Walker, who keeps a little shop in the principal street, not far from Queen's lane. We made haste to get ready for church, and sallied out to find the place of worship frequented by our landlady, which was not a difficult matter.

The little town of Lerwick consists of two-story houses, built mostly of unhewn stone, rough-cast, with steep roofs and a chimney at each end. They are arranged along a winding street parallel with the shore, and along narrow lanes running upward to the top of the hill. The main street is flagged with smooth stones, like the streets in Venice, for no vehicle runs on wheels in the Shetland islands. We went up Queen's lane and soon found the building occupied by the Free Church of Scotland, until a temple of fairer proportions, on which the masons are now at work, on the top of the hill, shall be completed for their reception. It was crowded with attentive worshipers, one of whom obligingly came forward and found a seat for us. The minister, Mr. Frazer, had begun the evening service, and was at prayer. When I entered, he was speaking of "our father the devil;" but the prayer was followed by an earnest, practical discourse, though somewhat crude in the 413 composition, and reminding me of an expression I once heard used by a distinguished Scotchman, who complained that the clergy of his country, in composing their sermons, too often "mak' rough wark of it."

I looked about among these descendants of the Norwegians, but could not see any thing singular in their physiognomy; and but for the harsh accent of the preacher, I might almost have thought myself in the midst of a country congregation in the United States. They are mostly of a tight complexion, with an appearance of health and strength, though of a sparer make than the people of the more southern British isles. After the service was over, we returned to our lodgings, by a way which led to the top of the hill, and made the circuit of the little town. The paths leading into the interior of the island, were full of people returning homeward; the women in their best attire, a few in silks, with wind-tanned faces. We saw them disappearing, one after another, in the hollows, or over the dark bare hilltops. With a population of less than three thousand souls, Lerwick has four places of worship—a church of the Establishment, a Free church, a church for the Seceders,

Library of Congress

and one for the Methodists. The road we took commanded a fine view of the harbor, surrounded and sheltered by hills. Within it lay a numerous group of idle fishing-vessels, with our great steamer in the midst; and more formidable in appearance, a Dutch man-of-war, sent to protect the Dutch fisheries, with the flag of Holland flying at the mast-head. 35* 414 Above the town, on tall poles, were floating the flags of four or five different nations, to mark the habitation of their consuls.

On the side opposite to the harbor, lay the small fresh-water lake of Cleikimin, with the remains of a Pictish castle in the midst; one of those circular buildings of unhewn, uncemented stone, skillfully laid, forming apartments and galleries of such small dimensions as to lead Sir Walter Scott to infer that the Picts were a people of a stature considerably below the ordinary standard of the human race. A deep Sabbath silence reigned over the scene, except the sound of the wind, which here never ceases to blow from one quarter or another, as it swept the herbage and beat against the stone walls surrounding the fields. The ground Under our feet was thick with daisies and the blossoms of the crow-foot and other flowers; for in the brief summer of these islands, nature, which has no groves to embellish, makes amends by pranking the ground, particularly in the uncultivated parts, with a great profusion and variety of flowers.

The next morning we were rowed, by two of Jim Sinclair's boys, to the island of Bressay, and one of them acted as our guide to the remarkable precipice called the Noup of the Noss. We ascended its smooth slopes and pastures, and passed through one or two hamlets, where we observed the construction of the dwellings of the Zetland peasantry. They are built of unhewn stone, with roofs of 415 turf held down by ropes of straw neatly twisted; the floors are of earth; the cow, pony, and pig live under the same roof with the family, and the manure pond, a receptacle for refuse and filth, is close to the door. A little higher up we came upon the uncultivated grounds, abandoned to heath, and only used to supply fuel by the cutting of peat. Here and there women were busy piling the square pieces of peat in stacks, that they might dry in the wind. "We carry home these pits in a basket on our showlders, when they are dry," said one of them to me; but those who can

Library of Congress

afford to keep a pony, make him do this work for them. In the hollows of this part of the island we saw several fresh-water ponds, which were enlarged with dykes and made to turn grist mills. We peeped into one or two of these mills, little stone buildings, in which we could hardly stand upright, inclosing two small stones turned by a perpendicular shaft, in which are half a dozen cogs; the paddles are fixed below, and there struck by the water, turn the upper stone.

A steep descent brought us to the little strait, bordered with rocks, which divides Brassey from the island called the Noss. A strong south wind was driving in the billows from the sea with noise and foam, but they were broken and checked by a bar of rocks in the middle of the strait, and we crossed to the north of it in smooth water. The ferryman told us that when the wind was northerly he crossed to the south of the bar. As we climbed the hill of the Noss the mist began to drift thinly around us from the 416 sea, and flocks of sea-birds rose screaming from the ground at our approach. At length we stood upon the brink of a precipice of fearful height, from which we had a full view of the still higher precipices of the neighboring summit. A wall of rock was before us six hundred feet in height, descending almost perpendicularly to the sea, which roared and foamed at its base among huge masses of rock, and plunged into great caverns, hollowed out by the beating of the surges for centuries. Midway on the rock, and above the reach of the spray, were thousands of sea-birds, sitting in ranks on the numerous shelves, or alighting, or taking wing, and screaming as they flew. A cloud of them were constantly in the air in front of the rock and over our heads. Here they make their nests and rear their young, but not entirely safe from the pursuit of the Zetlander, who causes himself to be let down by a rope from the summit and plunders their nests. The face of the rock, above the portion which is the haunt of the birds, was fairly tapestried with herbage and flowers which the perpetual moisture of the atmosphere keeps always fresh—daisies nodding in the wind, and the crimson phlox, seeming to set the cliffs on flame; yellow buttercups, and a variety of other plants in bloom, of which I do not know the name.

Magnificent as this spectacle was, we were not satisfied without climbing to the summit. As we passed upward, we saw where the rabbits had made their burrows in the elastic peat-like soil close to the very edge of the precipice. 417 We now found ourselves involved in the cold streams of mist which the strong sea-wind was drifting over us; they were in fact the lower skirts of the clouds. At times they would clear away and give us a prospect of the green island summits around us, with their bold headlands, the winding straits between, and the black rocks standing out in the sea. When we arrived at the summit we could hardly stand against the wind, but it was almost more difficult to muster courage to look down that dizzy depth over which the Zetlanders suspend themselves with ropes, in quest of the eggs of the sea-fowl. My friend captured a young gull on the summit of the Noup. The bird had risen at his approach, and essayed to fly towards the sea, but the strength of the wind drove him back to the land. He rose again, but could not sustain a long flight, and coming to the ground again; was caught, after a spirited chase, amidst a wild clamor of of the sea-fowl over our heads.

Not far from the Noup is the Holm, or, as it is sometimes called, the Cradle or Basket, of the Noss. It is a perpendicular mass of rock, two or three hundred feet high, with a broad flat summit, richly covered with grass, and is separated from the island by a narrow chasm, through which the sea flows. Two strong ropes are stretched from the maid island to the top of the Holm, and on these is slung the cradle or basket, a sort of open box made of deal boards, in which the shepherds pass with their sheep to the top of the Holm. We found the cradle strongly secured by lock 418 and key to the stakes on the side of the Noss, in order, no doubt, to prevent any person from crossing for his own amusement.

As we descended the smooth pastures of the Noss, we fell in with a herd of ponies, of a size somewhat larger than is common on the islands. I asked our guide, a lad of fourteen years of age, what was the average price of a sheltie. His answer deserves to be written in letters of gold—

"It's jist as they're bug an' smal'."

From the ferryman, at the strait below, I got more specific information. They vary in price from three to ten pounds, but the latter sum is only paid for the finest of these animals, in the respects of shape and color. It is not a little remarkable, that the same causes which, in Shetland, have made the horse the smallest of ponies, have almost equally reduced the size of the cow. The sheep, also—a pretty creature, I might call it—from the fine wool of which the Shetland women knot the thin webs known by the name of Shetland shawls, is much smaller than any breed I have ever seen. Whether the cause be the perpetual chilliness of the atmosphere, or the insufficiency of nourishment—for, though the long Zetland winters are temperate, and snow never lies long on the ground, there is scarce any growth of herbage in that season—I will not undertake to say, but the people of the islands ascribe it to the insufficiency of nourishment. It is, at all events, remarkable 419 that the traditions of the country should ascribe to the Picts, the early inhabitants of Shetland, the same dwarfish stature, and that the numerous remains of their habitations which still exist, should seem to confirm the tradition. The race which at present possesses the Shetlands is, however, of what the French call "an advantageous stature," and well limbed. If it be the want of a proper and genial warmth, which prevents the due growth of the domestic animals, it is a want to which the Zetlanders are not subject. Their hills afford the man apparantly inexhaustible supply of peat, which costs the poorest man nothing but the trouble of cutting it and bringing it home; and their cottages, I was. told, are always well warmed in winter.

In crossing the narrow strait which separates the Noss from Bressay, I observed on the Bressay side, overlooking the water, a round hillock, of very regular shape, in which the green turf was intermixed with stones. "That," said the ferryman, "is what we call a Pictish castle. I mind when it was opened; it was full of rooms, so that ye could go over every part of it." I climbed the hillock, and found, by inspecting several openings, which had been made by the peasantry to take away the stones, that below the turf it was a

Library of Congress

regular Work of Pictish masonry, but the spiral galleries, which these openings revealed, had been completely choked up, in taking away the materials of which they were built. Although plenty of stone may be found 420 everywhere in the islands, there seems to be a disposition to plunder these remarkable remains, for the sake of building cottages, or making those inclosures for their cabbages, which the islanders call *crubs*. They have been pulling down the Pictish castle, on the little island in the fresh-water loch called Cleikimin, near Lerwick, described with such minuteness by Scott in his journal, till very few traces of its original construction are left. If the inclosing of lands for pasturage and cultivation proceeds as it has begun, these curious monuments of a race which has long perished, will disappear.

Now that we were out of hearing of the cries of the sea-birds, we were regaled with more agreeable sounds. We had set out, as we climbed the island of Bressay, amid a perfect chorus of larks, answering each other in the sky, and sometimes, apparently, from the clouds; and now we heard them again overhead, pouring out their sweet notes so fast and so ceaselessly, that it seemed as if the little creatures imagined they had more to utter, than they had time to utter it in. In no part of the British Islands have I seen the larks so numerous or so merry, as in the Shetlands.

We waited awhile at the wharf by the minister's house in Bressay, for Jim Sinclair, who at length appeared in his boat to convey us to Lerwick. "He is a noisy fallow," said our good landlady, and truly we found him voluble enough, but quite amusing. As he rowed us to town he gave us a sample of his historical knowledge, talking of Sir Walter 421 Raleigh and the settlement of North America, and told us that his greatest pleasure was to read historical books in the long winter nights. His children, he said, could all read and write. We dined on a leg of Shetland mutton, with a tart made "of the only fruit of the Island" as a Scotchman called it, the stalks of the rhubarb plant, and went on board of our steamer about six o'clock in the afternoon. It was matter of some regret to us that we were obliged to leave Shetland so soon. Two or three days more might have been pleasantly passed among its grand precipices, its winding straits, its remains of a remote and rude antiquity,

Library of Congress

its little horses, little cows, and little sheep, its sea-fowl, its larks, its flowers, and its hardy and active people. There was an amusing novelty also in going to bed, as we did, by daylight, for at this season of the year, the daylight is never out of the sky, and the flush of early sunset only passes along the horizon from the northwest to the northeast, where it brightens into sunrise.

The Zetlanders, I was told by a Scotch clergyman, who had lived among them forty years, are naturally shrewd and quick of apprehension; "as to their morals," he added, "if ye stay among them any time ye'll be able to judge for yourself." So, on the point of morals, I am in the dark. More attention, I hear, is paid to the education of their children than formerly, and all have the opportunity of learning to read and write in the parochial schools. Their agriculture is still very rude, they are very unwilling to adopt the instruments of husbandry used in England, but on the whole they are making some progress. A Shetland gentleman, who, as he remarked to me, had "had the advantage of seeing some other countries" besides his own, complained that the peasantry were spending too much of their earnings for tea, tobacco, and spirits. Last winter a terrible famine came upon the islands; their fisheries had been unproductive, and the potato crop had been cut off by the blight. The communication with Scotland by steamboat had ceased, as it always does in winter, and it was long before the sufferings of the Shetlanders were known in Great Britain, but as soon as the intelligence was received, contributions were made and the poor creatures were relieved.

Their climate, inhospitable as it seems, is healthy, and they live to a good old age. A native of the island, a baronet, who has a great white house on a bare field in sight of Lerwick, and was a passenger on board the steamer in which we made our passage to the island, remarked that if it was not the healthiest climate in the world, the extremely dirty habits of the peasantry would engender disease, which, however, was not the case. "It is, probably, the effect of the saline particles in the air," he added. His opinion seemed to be that the dirt was salted by the sea-winds, and preserved from further decomposition. I was somewhat amused, in hearing him boast of the climate of Shetland in winter. "Have

Library of Congress

you never observed” said he, turning to the old Scotch clergyman of whom I have 423 already spoken, “how much larger the proportion of sunny days is in our islands than at the south ?” “I have never observed it,” was the dry answer of the minister.

The people of Shetland speak a kind of Scottish, but not with the Scottish accent. Four hundred years ago, when the islands were transferred from Norway to the British crown, their language was Norse, but that tongue, although some of its words have been preserved in the present dialect, has become extinct. “I have heard,” said an intelligent Shetlander to me, “that there are yet, perhaps, half a dozen persons in one of our remotest neighborhoods, who are able to speak it, but I never met with one who could.”

In returning from Lerwick to the Orkneys, we had a sample of the weather which is often encountered in these latitudes. The wind blew a gale in the night, and our steamer was tossed about on the waves like an egg-shell, much to the discomfort of the passengers. We had on board a cargo of ponies, the smallest of which were from the Shetlands, some of them not much larger than sheep, and nearly as shaggy; the others, of larger size, had been brought from the Faro Isles. In the morning, when the gale had blown itself to rest, I went on deck and saw one of the Faro Island ponies, which had given out during the night, stretched dead upon the deck. I inquired if the body was to be committed to the deep. “It is to be skinned first,” was the answer.

424

We stopped at Kirkwall in the Orkneys, long enough to allow us to look at the old cathedral of St. Magnus, built early in the twelfth century—a venerable pile, in perfect preservation, and the finest specimen of the architecture once called Saxon, then Norman, and lately Romanesque, that I have ever seen. The round arch is everywhere used, except in two or three windows of later addition. The nave is narrow, and the central groined arches are lofty; so that an idea of vast extent is given, though the cathedral is small, compared with the great minsters in England. The work of completing certain parts of the building which were left unfinished, is now going on at the expense of the government. All the old flooring,

Library of Congress

and the pews, which made it a parish church, have been taken away, and the original proportions and symmetry of the building are seen as they ought to be. The general effect of the building is wonderfully grand and solemn.

On our return to Scotland, we stopped for a few hours at Wick. It was late in the afternoon, and the fishermen, in their vessels, were going out of the harbor to their nightly toil. Vessel after vessel, each manned with four stout rowers, came out of the port—and after rowing a short distance, raised their sails and steered for the open sea, till all the waters, from the land to the horizon, were full of them. I counted them, hundreds after hundreds, till I grew tired of the task. A sail of ten or twelve hours brought us to Aberdeen, with its old cathedral, encumbered 425 by pews and wooden partitions, and its old college, the tower of which is surmounted by a cluster of flying buttresses, formed into the resemblance of a crown.

This letter, you perceive, is dated at Aberdeen. It was begun there, but I have written portions of it at different times since I left that city, and I beg that you will imagine it to be of the latest date. It is now long enough, I fear, to tire you and I therefore lay down my pen.

36*

426

LETTER LII. EUROPE UNDER THE BAYONET.

Paris, *September* 13, 1849.

Whoever should visit the principal countries of Europe at the present moment, might take them for conquered provinces, held in subjection by their victorious masters, at the point of the sword. Such was the aspect which France presented when I came to Paris a few weeks since. The city was then in what is called, by a convenient fiction, a state of siege; soldiers filled the streets, were posted in every public square and at every corner, were seen marching before the churches, the cornices of which bore the inscription of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, keeping their brethren quiet by the bayonet. I have since made

Library of Congress

a journey to Bavaria and Switzerland, and on returning I find the siege raised, and these demonstrations of fraternity less formal, but the show and the menace of military force are scarcely less apparent. Those who maintain that France is not fit for liberty, need not afflict themselves with the idea that there is at present more liberty in France than her people know how to enjoy.

427

On my journey, I found the cities along the Rhine crowded with soldiers; the sound of the drum was heard among the hills covered with vines; women were trundling loaded wheel-barrows, and carrying panniers like asses, to earn the taxes which are extorted to support the men who stalk about in uniform. I entered Heidelberg with anticipations of pleasure; they were dashed in a moment; the city was in a state of siege, occupied by Prussian troops which had been sent to take the part of the Grand Duke of Baden against his people. I could hardly believe that this was the same peaceful and friendly city which I had known in better times. Every other man in the streets was a soldier; the beautiful walks about the old castle were full of soldiers; in the evening they were reeling through the streets. "This invention," said a German who had been a member of the Diet of the Confederation lately broken up, "this invention of declaring a city, which has unconditionally submitted, to be still in a state of siege, is but a device to practice the most unbounded oppression. Any man who is suspected, or feared, or disliked, or supposed not to approve of the proceedings of the victorious party, is arrested and imprisoned at pleasure. He may be guiltless of any offence which could be made a pretext for condemning him, but his trial is arbitrarily postponed, and when at last he is released, he has suffered the penalty of a long confinement, and is taught how dangerous it is to become obnoxious to the government."

428

From Heidelberg, thus transformed, I was glad to take my departure as soon as possible. Our way from that city to Heilbronn, was through a most charming country along the valley of the Neckar. Here were low hills and valleys rich with harvests, a road embowered in

Library of Congress

fruit-trees, the branches of which were propped with stakes to prevent them from breaking with their load, and groves lying pleasantly in the morning sunshine, where ravens were croaking. Birds of worse omen than these were abroad, straggling groups, and sometimes entire companies of soldiers, on their way from one part of the duchy to another; while in the fields, women, prematurely old with labor, were wielding the hoe and the mattock, and the younger and stronger of their sex were swinging the scythe. In all the villages through which we passed, in the very smallest, troops were posted, and men in military uniform were standing at the doors, or looking from the windows of every inn and beer-house.

At Heilbronn we took the railway for Stuttgart, the capital of Wurtemberg. There was a considerable proportion of men in military trappings among the passengers, but at one of the stations they came upon us like a cloud, and we entered Stuttgart with a little army. That city, too, looked as if in a state of siege, so numerous were the soldiery, though the vine-covered hills, among which it is situated, could have given them a better occupation. The railway, beyond Stuttgart, wound through a deep valley and ended at Geisslingen, an ancient Swabian town, in a 429 gorge of the mountains, with tall old houses, not one of which, I might safely affirm, has been built within the last two hundred years. From this place to Ulm, on the Danube, the road was fairly lined with soldiers, walking or resting by the wayside, or closely packed in the peasants' wagons, which they had hired to carry them short distances. At Ulm we were obliged to content ourselves with straitened accommodations, the hotels being occupied by the gentry in epaulettes.

I hoped to see fewer of this class at the capital of Bavaria, but it was not so; they were everywhere placed in sight as if to keep the people in awe. "These fellows," said a German to me, "are always too numerous, but in ordinary times they are kept in the capitals and barracks, and the nuisance is out of sight. Now, however, the occasion is supposed to make their presence necessary in the midst of the people, and they swarm everywhere." Another, it was our host of the Goldener Hirsch, said to my friend, "I think I shall emigrate to America, I am tired of living under the bayonet."

Library of Congress

I was in Munich when the news arrived of the surrender of the Hungarian troops under Görgey, and the fall of the Hungarian republic. All along my journey I had observed tokens of the intense interest which the German people took in the result of the struggle between Austria and the Magyars, and of the warmth of their hopes in favor of the latter. The intelligence was received with the deepest sorrow. "So perishes," said a Bavarian, "the last hope of European liberty."

Our journey to Switzerland led us through the southern part of Bavaria, among the old towns which formed a part of ancient Swabia. The country here, in some respects, resembles New England; here are broad woods, large orchards of the apple and pear, and scattered farm-houses— of a different architecture, it is true, from that of the Yankees, and somewhat resembling, with their far-projecting eaves, those of Switzerland. Yet there was a further difference—everywhere, men were seen under arms, and women at the plough.

So weary had I grown of the perpetual sight of the military uniform, that I longed to escape into Switzerland, where I hoped to see less of it, and it was with great delight that I found myself at Lindau, a border town of Bavaria, on the Bodensee, or Lake of Constance, on the shores of which the boundaries of four sovereignties meet. A steamer took us across the lake, from a wharf covered with soldiers, to Roorschach, in Switzerland, where not a soldier was to be seen. Nobody asked for our passports, nobody required us to submit our baggage to search. I could almost have kneeled and kissed the shore of the hospitable republic; and really it was beautiful enough for such a demonstration of affection, for nothing could be lovelier than the declivities of that shore with its woods and orchards, and grassy meadows, and green hollows running upward to the mountain-tops, all fresh with a shower which had just passed and now glittering in the sunshine, and interspersed with large Swiss houses, bearing quaintly-carved galleries, and broad overhanging roofs, while to the east rose the glorious summits of the Alps, mingling with the clouds.

In three or four hours we had climbed up to St. Gall— St. Gallen, the Germans call it— situated in a high valley, among steep green hills, which send down spurs of woodland to

Library of Congress

the meadows below. In walking out to look at the town, we heard a brisk and continued discharge of musketry, and, proceeding in the direction of the sound, came to a large field, evidently set apart as a parade-ground, on which several hundred youths were practicing the art of war in a sham fight, and keeping up a spirited fire at each other with blank cartridges. On inquiry, we were told that these were the boys of the schools of St. Gall, from twelve to sixteen years of age, with whom military exercises were a part of their education. I was still, therefore, among soldiers, but of a different class from those of whom I had seen so much. Here, it was the people who were armed for self-protection; there, it was a body of mercenaries armed to keep the people in subjection.

Another day's journey brought us to the picturesque town of Zurich, and the next morning about four o'clock I was awakened by the roll of drums under my window. Looking out, I saw a regiment of boys of a tender age, in a uniform of brown linen, with little light muskets on their shoulders, and miniature knapsacks on their backs, completely equipped and furnished for war, led on by their little officers in regular military order marching and wheeling to the sound of martial music with all the precision of veterans. In Switzerland arms are in every man's hands; he is educated to be a soldier, and taught that the liberties of his country depend on his skill and valor. The worst effect, perhaps of this military education is, that the Swiss, when other means of subsistence are not easily found, become military adventurers and sell their services to the first purchaser. Meantime, nobody is regarded as properly fitted for his duties as a member of the state, who is not skilled in the use of arms. Target-shooting, *Freischiessen*, is the national amusement of Switzerland, and has been so ever since the days of Tell; occasions of target-shooting are prescribed and superintended by the public authorities. They were practicing it at the stately city of Berne when we visited it; they were practicing it at various other places as we passed. Every town is provided with a public shooting-ground near its gates.

It was at one of the most remarkable of these towns; it was at Freiburg, Catholic Freiburg, full of Catholic seminaries and convents, in the churches of which you may hear the shrill voices, of the nuns chanting matins, themselves unseen; it was at Freiburg, grandly

Library of Congress

seated on the craggy banks of her rivers, flowing in deep gulfs, spanned by the loftiest and 433 longest chain-bridges in the world, that I saw another evidence of the fact that Switzerland is the only place on the continent where freedom is understood, or allowed to have an existence. A proclamation of the authorities of the canton was pasted on the walls and gates, ordaining the 16th of September as a day of religious thanksgiving. After recounting the motives of gratitude to Providence; after speaking of the abundance of the harvests, the health enjoyed throughout Switzerland, at the threshold the of which cholera had a second time been stayed; the subsidence of political animosities, and the quiet enjoyment of the benefits of the new constitution upon which the country had entered, the proclamation mentioned, as a special reason of gratitude to Almighty God, that Switzerland, in this day of revolutions, had been enabled to offer, among her mountains, a safe and unmolested asylum to the thousands of fugitives who had suffered defeat in the battles of freedom.

I could not help contrasting this with the cruel treatment shown by France to the political refugees from Baden and other parts of Germany. A few days before, it had been announced that the French government required of these poor fellows that they should either enlist at once in the regiments destined for service in Algiers, or immediately leave the country—offering them the alternative of military slavery, or banishment from the country in which they had hoped to find a shelter.

I have spoken of the practice of Switzerland in regard to 434 passports, an example which it does not suit the purpose of the French politicians to follow. Here, and all over the continent, the passport system is as strictly and vexatiously enforced as ever. It is remarkable that none of the reformers occupied in the late remodelling of European institutions, seem to have thought of abolishing this invention of despotism—this restraint upon the liberty of passing from place to place, which makes Europe one great prison. If the people had been accustomed to perfect freedom in this respect, though but a short time, it might have been found difficult, at least in France, to reimpose the old restraints. The truth is, however, that France is not quite so free at present as she was under Louis

Library of Congress

Philippe. The only advantage of her present condition is, that the constitution places in the hands of the people the means of peaceably perfecting their liberties, whenever they are enlightened enough to claim them.

On my way from Geneva to Lyons I sat in the *banquette* of the diligence among the plebeians. The conversation happened to turn on politics, and the expressions of hatred against the present government of France, which broke from the conductor, the coachman, and the two passengers by my side, were probably significant of the feeling which prevails among the people. "The only law now," said one, "is the law of the sabre." "The soldiers and the *gens d'armes* have every thing their own way now," said another, "but by and by they will be glad to hide in the sewers." The 435 others were no less emphatic in their expressions of anger and detestation.

The expedition to Rome is unpopular throughout France, more especially so in the southern part of the republic, where the intercourse with Rome has been more frequent, and the sympathy with her people is stronger. "I have never," said an American friend, who has resided some time in Paris, "heard a single Frenchman defend it." It is unpopular, even among the troops sent on the expedition, as is acknowledged by the government journals themselves. To propitiate public opinion, the government has changed its course, and after making war upon the Romans to establish the pontifical throne, now tells the Pope that he must submit to place the government in the hands of the laity. This change of policy has occasioned a good deal of surprise and an infinite deal of discussion. Whatever may be its consequences, there is one consequence which it can not have, that of recovering to the President and his ministry the popularity they have lost.

436

LETTER LIII. VOLTERRA.

[This letter was casually omitted from its proper place near the beginning of the volume.]

Library of Congress

Rome, *April* 15, 1835.

Towards the end of March I went from Pisa to Volterra. This you know is a very ancient city, one of the strongholds of Etruria when Rome was in its cradle; and, in more modern times, in the age of Italian republics, large enough to form an independent community of considerable importance. It is, now a decayed town, containing about four thousand inhabitants, some of whom are families of the poor and proud nobility common enough over all Italy, who are, said to quarrel with each other more fiercely in Volterra than almost anywhere else. It is the old feud of the Montagues and the Capulets on an humbler scale, and the disputes of the Volterra nobility are the more violent and implacable for being hereditary. Poor creatures! too proud to engage in business, indolent for literature, excluded from political employments by the nature of the government, there is nothing left for them but to starve, intrigue, and quarrel. You may judge how miserably poor, 437 they are, when you are told they can not afford even to cultivate the favorite art of modern Italy; the art best suited to the genius of a soft and effeminate people. There is, I was told, but one pianoforte in the whole town, and that is owned by a Florentine lady who has recently come to reside here.

For several miles before reaching Volterra, our attention was fixed by the extraordinary aspect of the country through which we were passing. The road gradually ascended, and we found ourselves among deep ravines and steep, high, broken banks, principally of clay, barren, and in most places wholly bare of herbage, a scene of complete desolation, were it not for a cottage here and there perched upon the heights, a few sheep attended by a boy and a dog grazing on the brink of one of the precipices, or a solitary patch of bright green wheat in some spot where the rains had not yet carried away the vegetable mould.

Imagine to yourself an elevated country like the highlands of Pennsylvania or the western part of Massachusetts; imagine vast beds of loam and clay in place of the ledges of rock, and then fancy the whole region to be torn by water-spouts and torrents into gulleys too profound to be passed, with sharp ridges between—stripped of its trees and its grass—

Library of Congress

and you will have some idea of the country near Volterra. I could not help fancying, while I looked at it that as the earth grew old, the ribs of rock which once upheld the mountains had become changed into the bare heaps 27* 438 of earth which I saw about me, that time and the elements had destroyed the cohesion of the particles of which they were formed, and that now the rains were sweeping them down to the Mediterranean, to fill its bed and cause its waters to encroach upon the land. It was impossible for me to prevent the apprehension from passing through my mind, that such might be the fate of other quarters of the globe in ages yet to come, that their rocks must crumble and their mountains be levelled, until the waters shall again cover the face of the earth, unless new mountains shall be thrown up by eruptions of internal fire. They told me in Volterra, that this frightful region had once been productive and under cultivation, but that after a plague which, four or five hundred years since, had depopulated the country, it was abandoned and neglected, and the rains had reduced it to its present state.

In the midst of this desolate tract, which is, however, here. and there interspersed with fertile spots, rises the mountain on which Volterra is situated, where the inhabitants breathe a pure and keen atmosphere, almost perpetually cool and only die of pleurisies and apoplexies; while below, on the banks of the Cecina, which in full sight winds its way to the sea, they die of fevers. One of the ravines of which I have spoken,—the *balza* they call it at Volterra— has ploughed a deep chasm on the north side of this mountain, and is every year rapidly approaching the city on its summit. I stood on its edge and looked down a bank of soft 439 red earth five hundred feet in height. A few rods in front of me I saw where a road had crossed the spot in which the gulf now yawned; the tracks of the last year's carriages were seen reaching to the edge on both sides. The ruins of a convent were close at hand, the inmates of which, two or three years since, had been removed by the government to the town for safety. These will soon be undermined by the advancing chasm, together with a fine piece of old Etruscan wall, once inclosing the city, built of enormous uncemented parallelograms of stone, and looking as if it might be the work of the giants who lived before the flood; a neighboring church will next fall into the gulf, which

Library of Congress

finally, if means be not taken to prevent its progress, will reach and sap the present walls of the city, swallowing up what time has so long spared.

“A few hundred crowns,” said an inhabitant of Volterra to me, “would stop all this mischief. A wall at the bottom of the chasm, and a heap of branches of trees or other rubbish, to check the fall of the earth, are all that would be necessary.”

I asked why these means were not used.

“Because,” he replied, “those to whom the charge of these matters belongs, will not take the trouble. Somebody must devise a plan for the purpose, and somebody must take upon himself the labor of seeing it executed. They find it easier to put it off.”

The antiquities of Volterra consist of an Etruscan burial-ground, 440 in which the tombs still remain, pieces of the old and incredibly massive Etruscan wall, including a far larger circuit than the present city, two Etruscan gates of immemorial antiquity, older doubtless than any thing at Rome, built of enormous stones, one of them serving even yet as an entrance to the town, and a multitude of cinerary vessels, mostly of alabaster, sculptured with numerous figures in *alto rilievo*. These figures are sometimes allegorical representations, and sometimes embody the fables of the Greek mythology. Among them are many in the most perfect style of Grecian art, the subjects of which are taken from the poems of Homer; groups representing the besiegers of Troy and its defenders, or Ulysses with his companions and his ships. I gazed with exceeding delight on these works of forgotten artists, who had the verses of Homer by heart—works just drawn from the tombs where they had been buried for thousands of years, and looking as if fresh from the chisel.

We had letters to the commandant of the fortress, an ancient-looking stronghold, built by the Medici family, over which we were conducted by his adjutant, a courteous gentleman with a red nose, who walked as if keeping time to military music. From the summit of the tower we had an extensive and most remarkable prospect. It was the 19th day of

Library of Congress

March, and below us, the sides of the mountain, scooped into irregular dells, were covered with fruit-trees just breaking into leaf and flower. Beyond stretched the 441 region of barrenness I have already described, to the west of which lay the green pastures of the Maremma, the air of which, in summer, is deadly, and still further west were spread the waters of the Mediterranean, out of which were seen rising, the mountains of Corsica. To the north and northeast were the Appenines, capped with snow, embosoming the fertile lower valley of the Arno, with the cities of Pisa and Leghorn in sight. To the south we traced the windings of the Cecina, and saw ascending into the air the smoke of a hot-water lake, agitated perpetually with the escape of gas, which we were told was visited by Dante, and from which he drew images for his description of Hell. Some Frenchman has now converted it into a borax manufactory, the natural heat of the water serving to extract the salt.

The fortress is used as a prison for persons guilty of offences against the state. On the top of the tower we passed four prisoners of state, well-dressed young men, who appeared to have been entertaining themselves with music, having guitars and other instruments in their hands. They saluted the adjutant as he went by them, who, in return, took off his hat. They had been condemned for a conspiracy against the government.

The commandant gave us a hospitable reception. In showing us the fortress he congratulated us that we had no occasion for such engines of government in America. We went to his house in the evening, where we saw his 442 wife, a handsome young lady, whom he had lately brought from Florence, the very lady of the pianoforte whom I have already mentioned, and the mother of two young children, whose ruddy cheeks and chubby figures did credit to the wholesome air of Volterra. The commandant made tea for us in tumblers, and the lady gave us music. The tea was so strong a decoction that I seemed to hear the music all night, and had no need of being waked from sleep, when our *vetturino* , at an early hour the next morning, came to take us on our journey to Sienna.

THE END

Library of Congress

C 45 841